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THE MAKING OF THE NATIONS

FRANCE

BY

CECIL HEADLAM, M.A.

AUTHOR OF HISTORIES OF OXFORD, CHARTRES, NUREMBERG,
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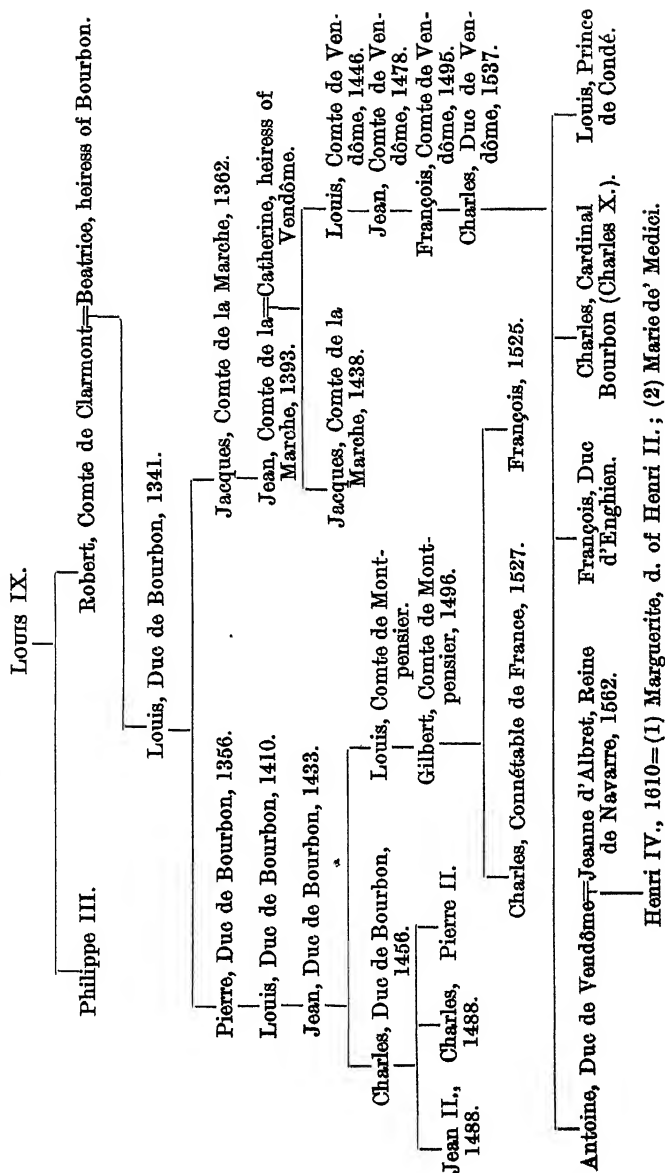


ADAM & CHARLES BLACK
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PREFACE

IN the present volume an attempt has been made to trace as fully as possible, within the necessary limits, the course of events which have moulded the French nation, their forms of government, their literature, and art. Although it is not possible in a book of this kind to quote documents and authorities, the author has spared no pains to ensure accuracy of statement, and to take into account the results of recent historical research. It is hoped, therefore, that this short history, like other volumes in this series, may prove of use to students in the upper forms of Public Schools, and at the Universities, as well as to the general reader who wishes to obtain a clear view of the facts and tendencies in the eventful story of the French People.

PEDIGREE OF THE BOURBON DYNASTY.





PALÆOLITHIC OBJECTS FROM CAVE-DWELLINGS IN FRANCE.

1. Piece of mammoth ivory engraved with a drawing of a mammoth, showing his woolly coat, found at La Madelaine, Dordogne.
2. Handle of a dagger of reindeer horn carved in the form of a mammoth, found at Bruniquet.
3. Carved reindeer horn from La Madelaine, Dordogne.

FRANCE

I

ROMAN GAUL

THE primitive races who once occupied France have left signs of their presence throughout the land. The caves in the mountain districts and the river-banks, north and south, still indicate the dwellings of prehistoric man; the lake-dwellings of Switzerland were probably once occupied by an Aryan race akin to the Ligurians, who subsequently spread over France. Migrating from the East, this race of dark, small-headed Ligurians found the land in the possession of the Iberians, and, succeeding to their dominion, occupied the great central plateau of France.

As to these Iberians, the conquering Romans recognized in the Aquitani,* who dwelt between the Pyrenees and the Garonne, a people nearly related to the Iberians of Spain. And still along the southern quarter of France, from Périgord to the Alps, we find traces of the Iberian type, a long-headed, black-haired race as distinct from the small-headed, dark-haired Ligurians as from the fair-haired, long-headed Northern Celts.

* The *Aquitani*, after the invasion of the Spanish *Vascones* in the sixth century, took the name of *Gascons*, a term of which *Basques* is a variant, and was applied to those Aquitani who, living in the cantons of the Lower Pyrenees, preserved their own indigenous race and language untainted by Roman influence.

For as subsequently an invasion of German Franks gave their name to France, so, in the second half of the fifth century B.C., invading Galli, a race resembling the German type, of Celtic origin, blue-eyed, tall, and fair, burst upon these indigenous races, and gave their name to Gaul. They subdued, but did not supplant, the short, dark natives they found in possession. Rather they thrust a Celtic wedge from the North between the Iberians, who were forced westwards south of the Garonne, and the Ligurians, who were thrust south-eastwards, into the Valley of the Rhone. The main body of conquering Gauls, or Celts, occupied, and ultimately dominated, the north-eastern and central plateau of France. Such was the state of Gaul just before the Roman Conquest.

But before Iberian, or Ligurian, or Celt took possession of the primitive forests which then covered the land, uncounted generations of an unnamed people, in a neolithic age, had raised their monuments from Brittany to Provence. Menhirs and cromlechs, vast upright monoliths arranged in lines or circles, and dolmens, two vertical stones carrying a flat one, to serve, perhaps, for the tombs of their heroes, remain now as sphinxes which hold the secret of bygone ages and a vanished race. They point back to an era of which history cannot yet speak with certainty.

To that neolithic age succeeded the ages of copper, of bronze, of iron, and then through the mists of antiquity we catch glimpses of Phœnician traders on their way to the mines of Spain, and the tin-mines of the Cassiterides, at the extremity of Cornwall. They brought to the Mediterranean shores of France galleys laden with pottery, arms of bronze, glasswork, and dyed cloth. These they bartered for fish and wood. Using the trade route of the Rhone to Britain by way of the Seine, they left upon the nomenclature of the coast towns many indications of

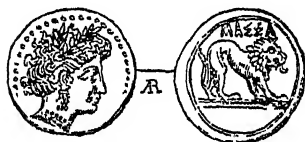
their presence (1100-500 B.C.). Herakles is identified with the Phœnician god Melkarth. The Pillars of Hercules (Straits of Gibraltar), Heraklea, the old name of St. Gilles, and the Phœnician Islands alike record their presence upon these southern shores. And the great coast road* from Italy and the East to Spain, the road which Hannibal trod and Marius guarded, was the old *Via Herculeæ* of the Phœnicians.

The legend of the journey of Hercules, making his way from the Straits of Gibraltar northwards over the Pyrenees, and returning down the Rhone to fight the Ligurians, whom he crushed by a heaven-sent storm of stones, and thus formed the stony desert of La Crau, is, in fact, but a picturesque version of Phœnician voyages through the Pyrenees, Cevennes, Brittany, and the Cassiterides, in search of gold and tin.

Upon the heels of the Phœnicians followed a colony of Phocæans (599 B.C.). Bearing with them the gods of their ancestral shrines, fire from the Prytaneum, and trees from the soil of their native land, these adventurous Greek mariners sailed from Corfu, not, as Herodotus expressly mentions, in ordinary cargo-boats, but in armed *pentekonteres*. They were therefore able not only to defy the privateers of the Tyrrhenian cities on the Mediterranean shores, and gradually to follow in the tracks of commerce which the great Phœnician traders had discovered and most jealously concealed, but also to make good their landing in the country east of the Rhone. Legend records the story of their settlement at Marseilles (Massalia). Their leader was a handsome and accomplished youth, Protis by name. His first step after landing was to send a deputation to Nannus, Chief of the Segobrigæ, the most

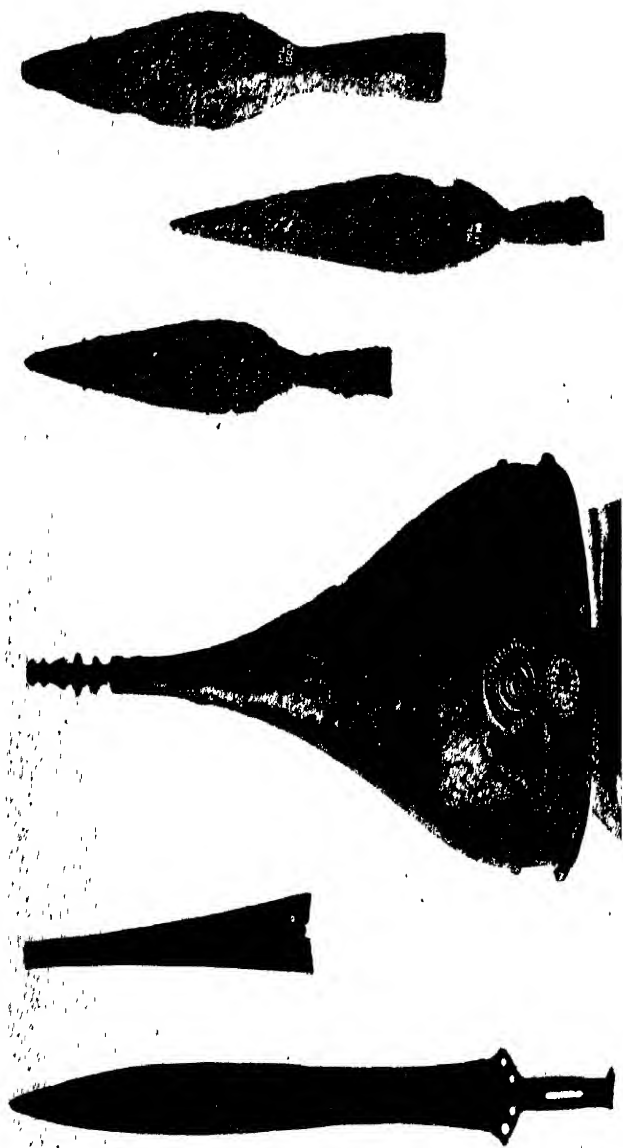
* The *Via Aurelia*, from Rome to Tarascon by La Turbie and Aix, extended later from Beaucaire to Spain, by Nîmes and Béziers, under the name of the *Via Domitia*.

powerful of the aboriginal Ligurian tribes who occupied what is now called Provence. Protis, it is said, by a happy coincidence arrived at Arles, the capital of Nannus, upon the very day on which Gyptis, the beautiful daughter of that King, was to choose a husband from the assembled warriors of the tribe. She was free to choose whom she would, but, according to custom, must fill a goblet at the banquet and present it to the youth of her choice. At that banquet Protis was present. The noble elegance of manner and person, the polished ease and regular features of the handsome Greek must have offered a striking contrast to the wild, untutored native warriors. To the amazement of Nannus and the chagrin of the suitors,



ANCIENT COINS OF MARSEILLES.

Gyptis filled the cup and presented it to Protis, the newcomer. But the contract was fulfilled; the Ligurian Prince gave to Protis the hand of his daughter in marriage, and to the Phocæans land upon which to build a city. This legend at least represents the historical fact of some alliance between the Greek settlers and the native tribes. But the rapid growth of the new colony soon roused the jealousy of the Segobrigæ. They rudely compared the foreigners' settlement to a bitch who, having humbly begged asylum in a shepherd's cottage to drop her pups, refused to depart when they were grown and strong. A conspiracy was formed. At the Feast of Flora, under pretence of joining in the celebrities of the Greek festival, the Ligurians introduced into Marseilles waggons covered with green boughs beneath which men and arms were concealed. But the plot was revealed by a young Ligurian woman to her Greek lover, and the conspirators were slaughtered to a man.



GALLIC ARMS.

Gallic sword and part of scabbard, spearheads found at Marson, Marne, and a bronze helmet, found in a chariot burial at Gorge-Meillet, Somme-Tourbe, Marne.

Photographed from the objects and a cast in the British Museum.

The youthful colony thus found itself embroiled with the native tribes, who had at first proved friendly. The timely arrival of a second Ionian colony from Phocæa (542 B.C.) turned the scale in their favour. For in the meantime the Ionian cities of Asia Minor had been reduced to subjection by the Medes and Persians. Rather than submit to defeat and slavery, the entire population of Phocæa took to their ships, and sailed away from the clutches of the all-conquering Persians. They reinforced the colony at Marseilles, which soon became the metropolis of the coast. Trading stations were founded at Nice (Nikaia), Antibes (Antipolis), and other places whose names recall their Grecian origin. Ere long the Ligurian shores were dotted with marble temples dedicated to Aphrodite or to Artemis. Some of the gods which the Greeks carved and worshipped in them are preserved in the museums of Provence. And upon the land itself, in its beauty and prosperity, we can still see plainly the fruit of the handiwork of the Greek settlers. For amongst the trees which they brought from their native Phocæa were figs and olives, which they first introduced, as well as the systematic culture of the vine.

Inland, Arles sprang into being ; Avignon and Cavaillon acknowledged the sway of the Massaliots. But for the most part they remained a seafaring people, whilst the Ligurians clung to the mountain fastnesses of the Esterel and Les Maures.

The fall of Carthage (201-146 B.C.) left Marseilles Queen of the Mediterranean. But the hostility of the native tribes led the Massaliots to invite the aid of Rome in their efforts to quell them. The frogs had appealed to King Stork. Apart from her desire for expansion, the Republic felt that a forward policy was necessary in order to secure the trade route to Spain. The Roman Conquest of Gaul began in 125 B.C. It comprised the conquest not only

of modern France, but of that Gaul which, bounded by the Alps, the Rhine, the Pyrenees, and the ocean, included also Alsace, Belgium, and Switzerland. Louis XIV. attempted, and the French armies in 1794 succeeded, for a brief space of time, in extending France once more to these her broad, ancient boundaries.

It is not within the scope of this book to trace the steps by which Gaul was gradually conquered by Rome, and then Romanized.

Between 121 and 58 B.C. Rome conquered and absorbed Gallia Transalpina, a province of which Narbonne was the capital, and which was gradually extended to include all the land between the Pyrenees, the Rhone, and the Cevennes. Between 58 and 49 B.C. Julius Cæsar completed the conquest of the rest of Gaul. The fall of Alesia, the fortified Gallic town, and the capture of Vercingetorix, the great leader who had organized a general rising for a war of deliverance, in 52 B.C., may be regarded as the turning-point of his campaigns. The triumphal arch which Cæsar erected at St. Remy, by the side of the monument which celebrates the great victory of his uncle, Gaius Marius, over the Teutons and Ambrons at Aquæ Sextiæ (Aix), 102 B.C., records in Roman fashion this great incident in history.

It was a conquest of the Celtic conquerors. Rome had already been in conflict with them.

We have seen that a series of Celto-Gallic migrations, beginning about 450 B.C., had ended in the establishment of the Gauls in the central plateau of France. Other migrations had taken place about 400 B.C., when Italy and the Balkans were invaded by the Celts. The rise of the Germans had sent another wave of Celtic migration sweeping southwards in search of lands to compensate them for those they had lost. They had surged through the Alps to be hurled back by Rome, whilst the great

nation of the Volsci (*cf. Welsh*) occupied the basin of the Rhone, and all the coast from Arles to the Pyrenees, with their capital at Toulouse. The Helvetii and Allobroges (Savoy), Cavari (Vaucluse), etc., settled in the south-east, the Boii in the south-west, with Bordeaux for their capital. In the north the Belgæ advanced up to the Seine and Marne. So the Celts, hurled back in Spain by Carthage, in Italy by Rome, and in Asia Minor, had settled down in the dominion of Gaul. Their conquest by the Romans now was only the final act in a series of blows delivered against their world-invasion elsewhere.

Cæsar has described the Celts who occupied Wales, Ireland, Brittany, and the Highlands, and then dominated Gaul, as brave, sociable, and of lively intelligence, but fickle, emotional, undisciplined, and inconstant in enterprise or reverse. These qualities in themselves could only lead to their being crushed by the scientific advance and disciplined courage of Roman civilization. And, besides, the Gauls were divided into nearly one hundred independent tribes; they had no organized military system or political unity, but merely rough scattered strongholds to which the inhabitants could flee for refuge in times of danger. Their society was cast in an aristocratic mould, at the head of which was a sacerdotal hierarchy—the Druids—and a small class of nobles, whose privilege it was, as in Greece and Rome, to form the cavalry of the nation. These Gallic noblemen lived in primitive châteaux, hunting the wild-boar through the vast areas of inaccessible forest, jungle, and morass, which then covered the now almost treeless stretches of the land from Chartres and Blois to Flanders and the Ardennes. They held the lower classes in complete subjection, the poor and weak looking to the richer and stronger for that protection and security which the State was not organized enough to provide, and paying in return with service in

peace and war. The lowest rank of this society consisted of slaves. Thus Gaul at the coming of the Romans presented many of the features which were afterwards reproduced in the France of the Middle Ages. The Gallic system of independent units bound by ties of service and protection was to have its counterpart in the great network of feudalism later—a decentralized system which was at once the cause and the consequence of the weakness of the State. For the existence of innumerable petty independent organisms involves perpetual anarchy and inevitable weakness. The Roman conquerors gave now to Gaul that unity of State and that strong, centralized government after which France has been striving ever since.

The whole subsequent history of France is the history of a struggle to regain under new conditions, and to evolve from new elements, the unity and strength of government which she lost with the fall of the Roman Empire.

The Gallic warriors, as depicted on the triumphal arches of Orange or St. Remy, were armed with huge wooden bucklers, covered with iron plates and decorated according to their rank. Swords, javelins, arrows, and helmets mounted with the horns of beasts or wings of birds, completed their equipment. They used war-chariots. Immoderate banquets at a round table—the feature which reappears in the Celtic legend of King Arthur—constituted their chief social pleasure. The worship of the waters—rivers, springs, and lakes—was particularly characteristic of the Gallic Celts. The famous fountain at Nîmes recalls this cult, and their sacred wells are the starting-points of many of the great Christian cathedrals which were subsequently raised upon the site of the pagan shrines. And from Borvo, their deity of water, is derived the name of that Bourbon

family which was to exercise so profound an influence upon the destinies of France.

For the rest, the organized clergy of Druids held sway through Britain and the North and Centre of Gaul. They believed in the immortality and transmigration of souls, and practised the cult of the mistletoe, an incident of tree-worship, and of Divine Mothers (*Bonæ Deæ*) and Fates (*Fatæ*). Their ritual was performed, not in temples made with hands, but in clearings of the immense forests or upon the mountain-tops. Chartres, in the heart of the woods of the Carnutes, was the chief centre of their priest-craft. They were not a hereditary caste, but prepared novices by a prolonged apprenticeship, and elected an Arch-Druid. They exercised authority, not only in every detail of moral and religious life, but also acted as judges.

Whilst they practised the ordinary magic, the *ju-ju* of the priest-class, such as incantations, and the sacrifice of scapegoats when their incantations failed, they monopolized the elementary science of the age. In addition to a smattering of medicine, they had a certain knowledge of astronomy. Knowledge is power. With the aid of their observations of sun and moon and stars, and their mystic circles of stones, the Druids were able to construct a calendar, and so to advise the farmers who consulted them as to the right seasons for sowing and other agricultural operations.

Rome civilized the Celts of Gaul and made good Romans of them within a century. The provincials were quickly and willingly absorbed into the advancing civilization, which offered them the advantages of peace, security, a common law, a common language, a commercial system, and a uniform coinage and justice; whilst the *Pax Romana* was maintained by the long line of Roman legions and fortifications along the Rhine frontier.

Cæsar had conquered Gaul; the national idea and its

champions had been crushed. It remained for Augustus to justify the domination of Rome by bringing order into the place of chaos. In an assembly held at Narbonne, 27 B.C., he constituted *Gallia Narbonensis* a separate province, thereby recognizing the political fact that centuries of Greek influence and Roman suzerainty had imbued it with a character sharply differentiated from that of the rest of Gaul, a differentiation markedly noticeable to-day in the temperament of the natives of the *Midi*, and in the physiognomy, for instance, of the inhabitants of Arles. The enlightened administration of Rome, whilst exacting tribute and military service from her subjects, left their towns free to govern themselves. And the towns of the Province (*Provence*), like Arles or Nîmes, soon aped the manners of the capital; they became miniature Romes, with baths, temples, aqueducts, theatres, amphitheatres, built in part with the aid of grants from the Imperial Treasury. Art, science, literature, followed in the train of the Pax Romana. Marseilles developed into one of the chief cities of the world. Her territory stretched from Andalusia to the Alpes Maritimes. And whilst she retained her character as a Greek mercantile republic governed by a timocracy, an oligarchy of notables, she rose to greater eminence than ever in commerce and in art. The youth of the Roman Empire flocked hither from all parts to be educated in a town which Cicero had termed the Athens of Gaul, and Pliny the Mistress of the Arts. And through this client city, with her maritime stations of Monaco, Nice, Antibes, and Agde, Rome kept secure the navigation of the coast, and the land-route from the Alps to the Pyrenees, and developed the commercial and political resources of the interior.

The remainder of Gaul was divided into (1) *Gallia Belgica*, which included the whole region between the

Saône, the Rhone, and the Rhine; (2) *Gallia Celtica* (*Lugdunensis*), stretching from the Saône to the ocean; and (3) *Aquitania*, from the Pyrenees to the Loire.

The pivot of the Roman economical and administrative system was not Paris, but Lyons, which was the centre of a network of Roman roads, and linked to the southern coast by the Rhone, and to Britain by the Saône and the Seine. This was the official residence of the Governor-General, the Legate of the Three Gauls, appointed by Augustus. And here, on the little peninsula formed by the junction of the Rhone and Saône, the altar of Rome and Augustus was erected as the symbol of Roman dominion. To this great altar at Lyons came once a year, on August 1, deputies from the provinces of Belgica, Lugdunensis, and Aquitania, to do homage in Provincial Assembly to the fact and idea of Imperial Unity. The provincials readily adopted the worship of the deified Emperors, as embodying this idea, and even of the members of their family before their death. The exquisitely beautiful temple at Nîmes, for instance, known as the *Maison Carrée*, was dedicated to the grandsons of Augustus when they were still alive.

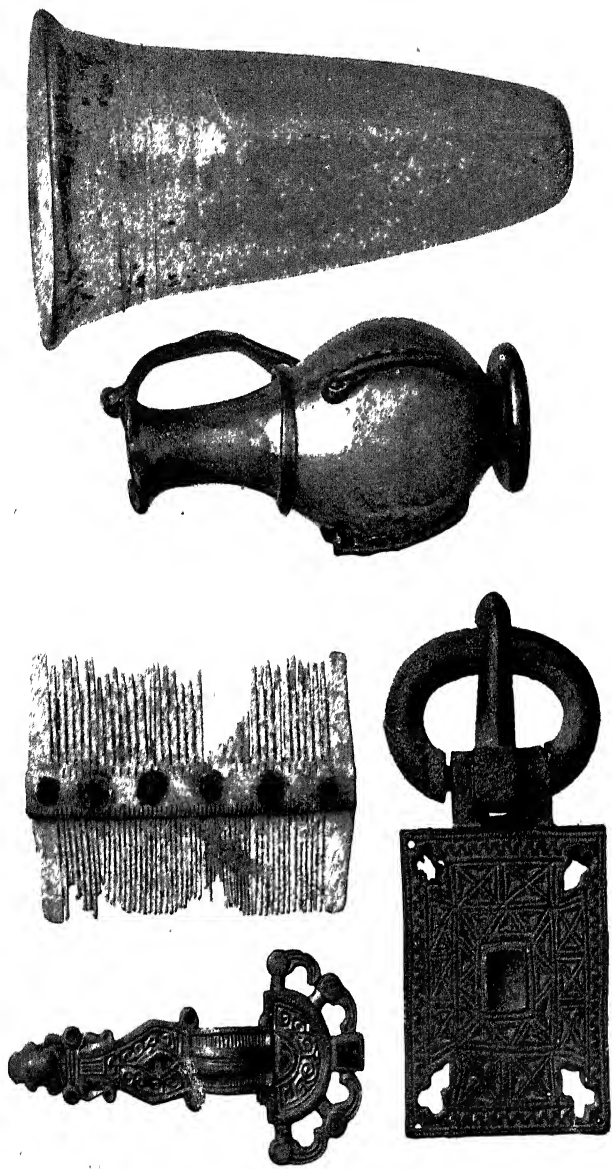
The principal task of the Roman Legates was the administration of justice. They went on circuit in their provinces, holding assizes in the various towns; and by degrees Roman law was everywhere substituted for Gallic law, a systematized, public, written code for a traditional and customary law interpreted by nobles and priests. Gradually, too, Latin, the language of civilization, took the place of the native Celtic tongue. In architecture, the great examples of the Roman builders, the mighty bridges, and aqueducts like the Pont du Gard, the vast amphitheatres, the triumphal arches at Orange or Vienne, the Græco-Roman temples, like the *Maison Carrée*, produced a profound and lasting impression upon later

French artists; whilst the statues wrought by Greek chisels quickly influenced and developed the crude craftsmanship of the pure Gallic sculptors. Just as the provincials desired to become Roman citizens, so they were ever eager to model the institutions of their cities upon those of their mistress, Rome. Municipalities were formed, in which the aristocratic traditions of the Celts were abandoned, and the forms of government which obtained in the Roman colonies were imitated. They were controlled by two annual magistrates (*consuls*), elected by a municipal council (*curia*).

The Druidical hierarchy had quickly lost its prestige owing to the Roman policy of suppressing political associations of this nature. It was now the turn of the cult of Imperialism to yield to the worship of Christ. The Altar of Rome and Augustus at Lyons was replaced by the Church of St. Peter. In later days a general desire sprang up to trace the evangelization of Gaul to the Apostles or Disciples who had learned the Gospel from the lips of its Founder Himself. There was a rivalry between the towns and churches for such a distinction. The name of an early Bishop, like St. Trophimus of Arles, was easily identified with the disciple of St. Paul. The whole legend of the Three Maries, and the miraculous voyage of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary Magdalen to the shores of France, sprang up in Provence.* The exact date of the evangelization of Gaul is doubtful, but it is at least probable that the new religion of Christ was introduced by the beginning of the second century.

By the end of that century a mission from Smyrna had settled at Lyons, where Pothinius, their leader, and many of his followers suffered martyrdom in the amphi-

* The origin of this legend has been traced by M. Gilles to the monuments erected in memory of Marius' campaigns. *Cf. my Provence and Languedoc.*



VISIGOTHIC OBJECTS FOUND AT HERPES, DEPT. CHARENTE, WESTERN FRANCE.

Reading from left to right. Bronze buckle with spiral ornament, bone comb with teeth of two sizes, bronze padlock buckle bottle of green glass, glass tumbler

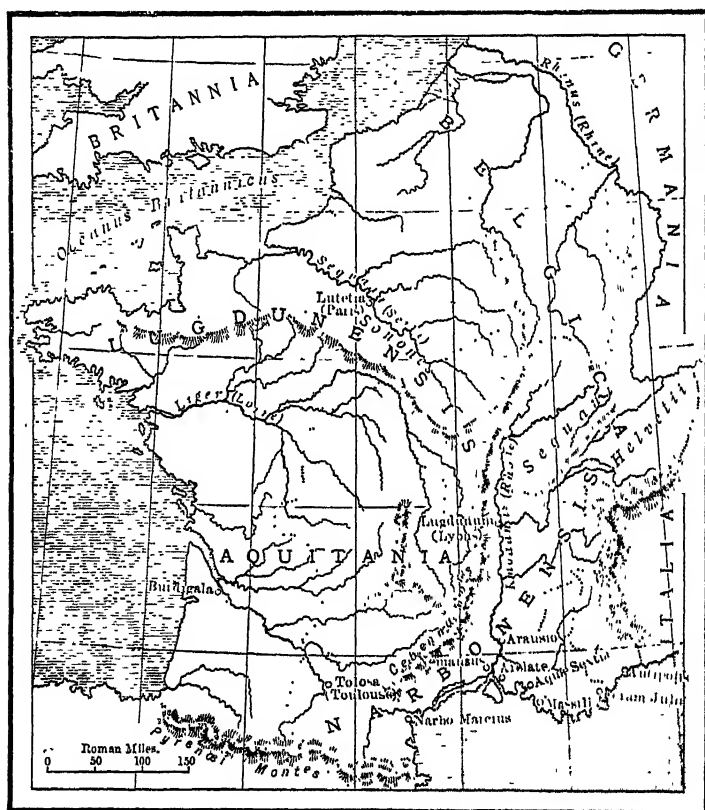
Photographed from the collection of Merovingian antiquities in the British Museum

theatre. A hundred years later another band of missionaries, led by St. Denis, arrived in Gaul. St. Denis was beheaded on the Hill of the Martyr (*Montmartre*) in Paris, and was afterwards hailed as the patron saint of France. According to the legend, the holy martyr, after his decapitation, walked for two miles carrying his head in his hands. But in spite of persecution the work of evangelization was bravely carried on. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. By the Edict of Milan (A.D. 312) Constantine proclaimed the toleration of the new creed. Christianity became the religion of the Emperors. They did their utmost to propagate it, and to force it upon the unwilling people of the country, the *pagans* (*pagus* = *pays*), who, preferring their mixture of Celtic and Roman mythology, clung obstinately to their own rites. It remained for the son of a Roman soldier born in Pannonia, St. Martin, the ascetic Bishop of Tours (A.D. 372), to bring the necessary eloquence and zeal to convert the country districts. Like the daring Roman soldier that he was, he carried the war into the heart of the ancient sanctuaries, living with his disciples in the grottoes of the Loire. St. Martin and St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, were the central figures of a great evangelizing movement, which succeeded in supplanting the memory of pagan gods by the names and emblems of Christian saints,* and occupying Roman and Celtic shrines in rocks and woods, by lakes and fountains, with Christian fanes and the cells of Christian hermits.

The organization of the Church was developed during the fourth and fifth centuries. The country was divided into bishoprics, which recognized the preponderating power of the Bishops of Rome. The Bishops, elected by the people under the direction of their confrères, and sup-

* So Venus Victrix became Ste. Victoire; Bacchus, St. Bacchus; etc.

ported by an ecclesiastical hierarchy of priests, deacons, acolytes, etc., began to acquire temporal power by virtue of the spiritual authority they wielded, and before which even Emperors bowed. And with increasing wealth and power those vices of avarice, greed, and simony, in monks and Bishops alike, began to creep in, which roused the indignation of satirists and reformers from St. Martin to Rabelais.



GAUL UNDER THE ROMANS.

II

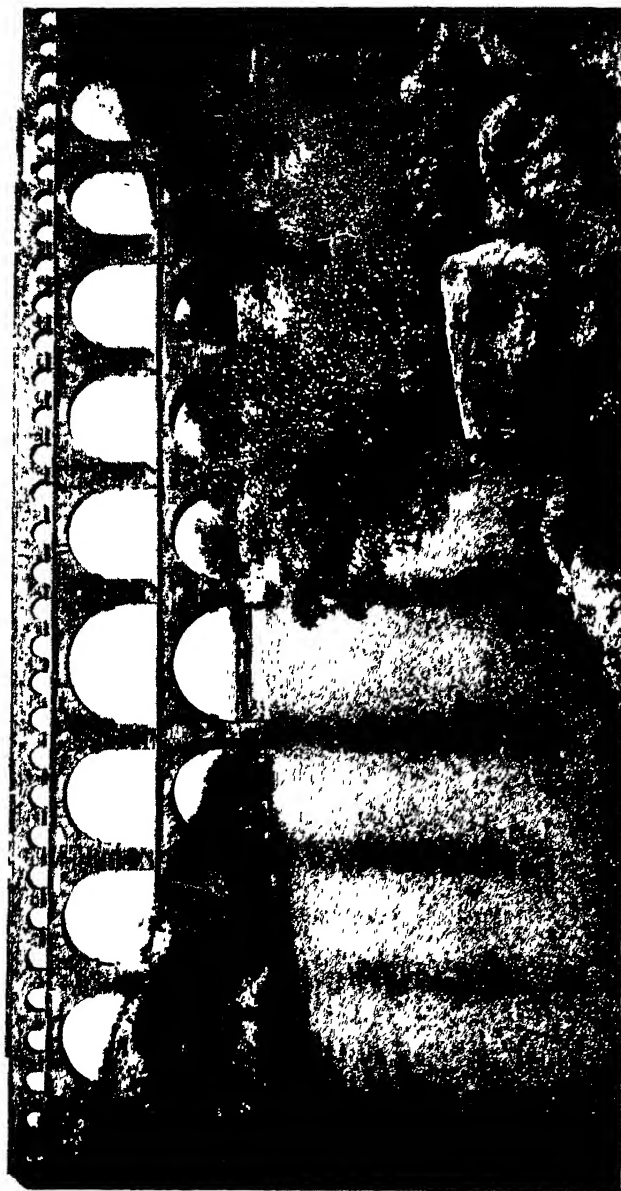
THE FRANKISH INVASION

A.D. 250—510

A PERIOD of profound peace and prosperity, during which Gaul became more and more Roman and civilized, closed with an era of military anarchy, civil war, barbarian invasion, and the dismemberment of the Empire. The discipline of the Roman armies which guarded the frontiers had weakened as their political power increased, and as the Emperors came to depend upon their favour. Their numbers were lessened, owing to the need of economy, at the very time when the danger of a German invasion was becoming more ominous. New peoples, all drawing from the Baltic coast—Goths, Vandals, Langobards, Burgundians, Quadi, Suebi, Marcomanni, Alemanni, Franks, Frisians, Saxons, Thuringians—were beginning to press upon the frontiers of the Danube and the Rhine. In 253 the Franks (*Franci, the Free*), who were establishing themselves in the territory stretching from the North Sea to Mayence on the right bank of the Rhine, and the confederacy of Alemanni (*All Men*), who were settling between the Main and the Alps, attacked Gaul. Four years later came a great invasion, which devastated the land. The Alemanni, pouring down the basin of the Rhone and crossing the Alps, struck down to Ravenna; the Franks, passing through Gaul from the north-east to the south-west, swarmed over the Pyrenees, like the

Cimbri before them, and penetrated through Spain even to Africa, leaving a line of utter ruin in their wake. From this time forward there was incessant fighting with the Teutons in the Rhine country. In 275 followed another terrible inundation of Germans, who seized and left in ruins no less than sixty of the leading cities of Gaul. The process was beginning again which the victories of Marius had checked centuries before.

Brave, rude, and fierce, these Germanic tribes had long been threatening to overrun Gaul. But for the Roman conquest there would long ago have been a Teutonic conquest. The campaigns of Cæsar had checked the irruption of Germans under Ariovistus into Celtic territory (71-57 B.C.). But their presence had always inspired the political instinct of the Romans with a prophetic dread ; and now, as their Empire weakened, the repeated invasions of the barbarians prepared the way for the extinction of their civilization and the new life of the Middle Ages. When the Empire was divided, and Constantinople became the capital of the East, Rome had remained nominally, but Milan, Trèves, or Arles had been adopted more usually as the actual seat of the Emperors of the West. The centre of administration drew closer to the threatened frontiers in the North (300-400). But as the barbarian conquest proceeded, the defence of Gaul, as of Britain, was gradually abandoned. Roman unity vanished with Roman peace. During the fourth century, when bitter experience of the barbarian hordes had made it clear that the Roman armies could no longer be relied upon to keep the frontiers inviolate, the Gallic towns began to fortify themselves, shrinking back within their narrowest limits, and devoting their attention to the sole purpose of security. The great Roman buildings, like the amphitheatres of Nîmes or Arles, half ruined by the barbarians, were allowed to remain in ruins or were used



Nîmes, France.

THE PONT-DU-GARD. Page 11

The Roman aqueduct near Nîmes which brought water to that city. It was built in 19 B.C. by command of Agrippa, and is still practically perfect

as bastions and forts. Men prepared for separate and isolated resistance behind impenetrable walls, and crowded into dark and narrow streets for protection. In the absence of a strong and tutelary government, Gaul returned little by little to the state of disintegration whence Rome had drawn it.*

By the middle of the fourth century the great kingdom of the Goths, stretching from the Don to the Danube, had been formed. Suddenly a storm-cloud came up from the steppes of the Black Sea and burst upon them. The Huns, a horde of nomad Tartars, living upon horseback, were a people so barbarous and terrible, with their yellow faces, flat foreheads, thick noses and narrow eyes, and their utter savagery, that they filled the barbarians of Germany themselves with panic. The Ostrogoths submitted to them; the Visigoths, abandoning their country, crossed the Danube, and, covering the land "like a rain of ashes from *Ætna*," destroyed a Roman army at Hadrianople (A.D. 378). Advancing south under Alaric, they were soon dictating terms to the panic-stricken Empire. The Teutonic conquest had begun, though the conquerors were long disguised under the title of allies (*fœderati*). For on the death of Alaric, Ataulf, renouncing the idea of establishing a permanent Gothic dominion in Italy, turned his people's footsteps into Gaul, where they were given land to occupy. He aimed at incorporating them in the Roman Empire. Under Theodoric, as nominal subjects of Rome, the Visigoths were granted full sovereignty over the land in South-West Gaul, which had been originally assigned to them for occupation only. They kept their national constitution, but were obliged to render military assistance to the Empire. Their territory in Aquitania stretched from Toulouse to Bordeaux, and was gradually

* Cf. Lavissee, II. i. 300.

extended northwards to the Loire, and southwards until it included the whole Spanish Peninsula. So it came about that when the Huns, led now by Attila, the Scourge of God, burst again, like an avalanche, upon the Empire in 451, they were hurled back by the joint resistance of the Romans and the German new-comers under Theodoric.

Meanwhile, under the same pressure from the Tartar hordes in the East, the teeming and seething hosts of Teutons—Franks, Burgundians, Alemanni, with an army of related tribes—had broken through the now defenceless Rhine frontier and occupied Gaul. Whilst (i.) the Visigoths were settling in the south-west, (ii.) the Burgundians, after a few years of aimless plundering, found homes in the south-east upon territory which still bears their name (406-410). They, too, were established as nominal subjects of the Empire, but really as an independent State. (iii.) The Alemanni occupied Alsace and the Valley of the Moselle. Nor were these the only States now carved out of the quivering mass of Roman Gaul. (iv.) The Ripuarian Franks advanced from the eastern bank of the Rhine to the Meuse and the Sambre, and took possession of Trèves. In the north (v.) the Salian Franks, from the shores of the North Sea, advanced and occupied Gallia Belgica from Namur to the Lys, and the vast forest of Charbonnière, and thus formed the great Flemish district, Germanic in race and tongue, which fills the north-east corner of France. (vi.) And the coasts were ravaged by Saxon pirates, who scoured them from the mouth of the Rhine to the mouth of the Loire. When they presently invaded Britain, the British Celts, fleeing across seas, gave their name to the north-west corner of Gaul—Brittany (*circa* 480).

The Gauls were for the most part quickly reconciled to living under the protection of their new masters,

instead of the now effete and burdensome rule of Rome. The invaders, we have seen, had proved themselves capable of uniting to defend their new country against the scourge of the Huns. When Attila had burned Metz and was threatening Paris (451), the inhabitants awaited his approach with consternation. They were reassured by the courage of a brave and holy shepherd girl, St. Geneviève, who urged them to fight, and not to flee. She prophesied that the Scourge of God would leave their town unscathed. The Huns, in fact, passed on to Orleans, where, and beneath the walls of Troyes, they were defeated with terrible carnage by the united forces of the Burgundians, Armoricans, and Visigoths. Gaul was saved, Attila passed on to Italy, and Paris, delivered, hailed in St. Geneviève, this forerunner of Joan of Arc, the patron saint of the future capital. Thus we see that, at a moment when Teutonic immigrations seemed to be utterly overwhelming the ancient civilization, the influence of Christianity was persisting. Amidst the universal wreckage, indeed, the Christian Church alone retained its organization, ready to teach the barbarian conquerors to assimilate much of the culture and many of the laws and institutions of the conquered, and in the end to rear a new and Holy Roman Empire on the ruins of the old.

The power of the Church was proved in more striking fashion in the approaching struggle between the Franks and Visigoths for the dominion of Gaul. The latter were ruled by Alaric II., a weak and indolent King, the very opposite of his father ; the former by Clovis.

Clovis was the son of Childeric, the son (?) of Merovech, the son of Clodio. Under Clodio the Salian Franks had advanced to Tournai, Cambrai, and the Somme (431), crossing the barrier of the great fortified Roman road which had hitherto held them in check. The name of Merovech (Sea-born), and the legend that he was the

son of a sea-monster who had overpowered his mother as she sat by the sea-shore, indicate that the Salian Franks drew from the shores of the North Sea. From him the dynasty of Clovis derives its title of *Merovingian*. Childeric, who died in 483 (?), was buried at his capital, Tournai, and there in 1653 his tomb and body were discovered. Under him the Franks had tasted of the riches of the country about the Seine and Loire. But it was reserved for Clovis, a fierce, unscrupulous soldier of iron will and vigorous genius, to consolidate the loose confederacy of tribes and families stretching from the North Sea down the Rhine Valley, and to begin the conquest of Roman Gaul in earnest. First he obtained possession of the country about the Seine (Battle of Soissons, 486) and the Loire; then, turning his eyes towards the Valley of the Rhone, he married the niece of the Burgundian King, Clotilda. Then he crushed the Alemanni on the Rhine. About 494 the struggle with the great rival power of the Visigoths began. The war was carried on, with varying success, for many years.

The turning-point was reached when Clovis, with a political sagacity resembling that of Henri of Navarre, was converted to Christianity (496), and thereby enlisted in his favour the greater part of Alaric's Gallo-Roman subjects, with the clergy at their head.

The Christianity of Clovis was the crudest form of superstition. According to the story, he was converted by the piety of his wife, Clotilda, and as the result of a bargain made with the Christian God when he was losing a battle against the Alemanni. His religion had no influence upon his conduct, which continued to be that of a bloodthirsty and treacherous savage, but he used it as a means of salving his conscience. He gave large sums of money to the clergy, and built many churches, including one at Paris, which afterwards became the Abbey of St. Geneviève.

None the less, the baptism of this "eldest son of the Church" in the Cathedral of Rheims, together with 3,000 of his warriors, was not a mere picturesque incident, but an event of supreme importance in the history of France, since we date from this occasion the passing of the dominant race into the fold of the Catholic Church. It was not a question of belief in the revelation of Christ or conformity to His teaching. The other Germans, indeed, who had entered the Empire—Burgundians, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Lombards—had already been converted to Christianity, but to that form of it known as Arianism, a Unitarian belief which stood, politically, for separation and local independence. They had no common religious organization; their triumph would have involved the political as well as the religious disintegration of Europe. The only source of political unity to take the place of that which had disappeared lay in the bond of union offered by the Catholicism, under the primacy of the Bishops of Rome, which was now adopted by Clovis.

Clovis did not strike at once. The power of the Visigoths was not to be despised. But at length, when he had allied himself with the Burgundians, and could count upon the aid of the Byzantine fleet as well as of the Bishops, Clovis, posing as the champion of the Catholic Church, suddenly crossed the Loire, and, marching upon Poitiers, met and overthrew the Gothic army (*Campus Vocladensis*, 507). Alaric he slew with his own hand. The rule of the Visigoths in Gaul was at an end. Clovis was recognized as the Consul, the delegate of the Emperor, the conqueror of the Arian heretics, the King of Gaul. He could even claim the title of Augustus. But the army of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, presently retook Provence; the Visigoths remained in possession of Septimania, and King Gondebrand retained his independence in the kingdom of Burgundy.

The Franks were clean-shaven but for a moustache. They wore their fair hair brought forward from the top of the head. From a leather belt which bound their close-fitting garments about their waists hung the long sword, the hanger or *scramasax*, and their favourite single-bladed axe, known as the *francisca*, as well as articles of toilet, like scissors or combs of bone. They were also armed with lances and shields, made of wood or wattles covered with skins. They were buried, like warriors awaiting a review, in full armour, and adorned with the jewellery of amber, glass, or gold, which appealed to their barbaric taste.

To this race of warriors the political inheritance of the Roman Empire had passed, and the task of reconstructing its unity. A new society was now to be formed out of a fusion of German and Roman elements. For under Clovis the Franks had achieved, not a mere immigration, but a veritable conquest. The result, therefore, was not a mere absorption of the immigrant into existing society, but a mingling of German and Gallo-Roman institutions into a new civilization. In the first place, there was grafted upon the weakened native stock a young, vigorous, and healthy race, ignorant indeed, but imbued with the proud spirit of independence and self-reliance characteristic of the German warrior. In the second place, the Germans brought with them, in their political institutions, the elements out of which have been developed modern free constitutional governments. Their national assemblies, and more especially the smaller local assemblies of the freemen of the hundred or canton, with their judicial functions and representative character, bore within them the germ of modern free legislatures ; whilst their principle of an elected monarchy exercised a profound influence upon the destinies of France, until it was lost sight of in the course of the

prolonged succession of the Capetian family to the throne. In the third place, they introduced an independent or self-developing system of customary law, ascertained and declared by the courts—that is, by the people themselves, since the courts were, as we have seen, public assemblies. Courts and customary or common law were alike destroyed when, at the end of the Middle Ages, the adoption of Roman law introduced a more scientific system of jurisprudence, and along with it the maxim, “Si veut le roi, si veut la loi.” Just as, through the force of circumstances, the elected monarchy of the Franks was to pass into the hereditary and absolute monarchy of France, so the power of the people over the law and its making was to cease, and be centred in the Sovereign.

Though these principles are traceable in the institutions of the Germans at the time of their conquest of Gaul, their actual law and the method of its enforcement were very crude. The familiar Salic Law, which dates from the time of Clovis (*circa* 500), but expounds and explains their traditional law and ancient usage, reveals a society based on the family, including freemen and slaves. All were subject to the royal authority, which was represented in each of the territorial divisions (*pagi*) by Counts (*Grafio* or *Comes*). The *pagus* was further divided into hundreds (*centenæ*). Each hundred had its court of judgment (*mâl*), composed of the freemen. But the provisions of the Salic Law indicate, further, an attempt upon the part of the State to substitute the judicial sentences of a court for the private vengeance of the family. It consists mainly of a tariff of fines payable for crimes, chiefly crimes of violence, as was natural in a community of warriors, famous for their courage, whose ruling passion was war. The fines were based upon the fixed value (*wergeld*) of the victim. These penalties were to be paid to the plaintiff and the State by

the offender in compensation for his wrong-doing. In order to arrive at such a settlement (*compositio*), the parties must appear before the local tribunal of the "hundred," subject to the royal tribunal. Trial by ordeal was admitted, and the testimony of witnesses to the good faith of a litigant. So far, then, punishment was taken out of the hands of the private avenger, though it is not to be supposed that law triumphed at once or universally. Roused by a murder or a rape, the Frankish families long preferred the arbitrament of arms, and chose to exact retribution from the offender and his family at the point of the sword rather than to await the decision of a court in obedience to the exigencies of public order. The Gallo-Romans continued to be judged, at least for some time, according to Roman law. For whatever the contributions of the new Teutonic element, still, as many of the great Christian cathedrals rose upon the site of pagan temples or springs, or, as at Loches, the castle of the Valois is reared upon Roman foundations, themselves built upon a rock pierced with the grottoes of primitive cave-dwellers, so the society of the Middle Ages rested upon the basis of its Gallo-Roman past. The guilds, the medieval trade unions, for instance, derive directly from the corporations of Roman artists and workmen (*collegia*). And the administrative machinery of the Romans, in matters of taxation and so forth, was naturally continued by the conquering Teutons, who had nothing to put in its place.

With the Frankish conquest of Gaul and the growth of the Germanic State across the Channel, the process was completed by which the centre of gravity of France swung northwards. The first development of civilization in Gaul had taken place along the Mediterranean coast, when the rivalry of the great empires of the South—Greek, Roman, Carthaginian—filled its shores with

the clash of arms and the jingle of the traders' caravans. But as the pressure of the vast Continental *hinterland* began to develop on the exposed northern and eastern frontiers—a pressure which has not grown less weak with years—greater power was generated where the greater struggle was called for. The chief frontier ceases to be in the South, and the Seine and Loire usurp the importance of the Rhone. The effort of resistance called Calais, Paris, Trèves, Rheims into ever-increasing power, whilst Arles, Nîmes, Narbonne receded from their proud predominance. The growing need for expansion of the Anglo-Saxon power across the sea could only be satisfied by expansion in the direction of France. First the Northmen and then the English came, and by their coming roused the vigour of the people whose fields they watered with blood—Normandy, Flanders, Brittany, Poitou, Guyenne. No civilized country is altogether the captain of its own fate, the moulder of its own civilization. The unity of France was to be promoted by a series of shocks from without; and it was for these reasons that Provence was finally to be merged in France, not France in Provence. The physical formation of the country contributed to this process. Between the extremes of north and south, which exhibit an extraordinary variety of soil and temperature, of mountain, plain, and river, of tillage, crops, and inhabitants, the centre of France, from Touraine to Burgundy, appears like a connecting-link or nerve centre, with here a dash of the north, there a touch of the south, binding the country into a connected whole. And the basin of Paris, uniform and accessible, in touch with north and south and east and west, through the Rhone, Saône, Meuse, Seine, and Loire, was soon to prove a veritable Carfax of waterways, at a time when the great Roman roads fell out of repair with the fall of their makers.

III

THE MAYORS OF THE PALACE

A.D. 511—768

ON the death of Clovis his sons divided his kingdom, and, whilst quarrelling amongst themselves, completed his career of conquest. They seized the kingdom of Burgundy, which had achieved a certain unity and character of its own, and divided it amongst themselves (534); they seized and divided Provence, the territory of the Ostrogoths (536). Though unsuccessful against the Visigoths in Septimania, which remained attached to Spain, they reduced the Saxons and Thuringians to pay tribute. Their methods of warfare were crude and savage; ruin, pillage, massacre, marked their advance; but they had thus almost succeeded in carving out for themselves a kingdom of Gaul bounded by the limits set by Cæsar. This vast heritage finally passed to the sole survivor of the descendants of Clovis—Clotair (558).

Clotair left four sons (561)—Caribert, Guntram, Sigebert, Chilperic. Caribert soon died, and his share—Paris and the west—was divided amongst the others. Sigebert, who inherited Rheims and the east, married Brunehaut, daughter of Athanagilde, King of the Visigoths of Spain; and Chilperic, who had received Soissons and the north-west, married her eldest sister, Galswinthe. Her he presently murdered, and married his former mistress, a servant, Frédégonde. Civil war soon broke

out between them, and continued with the utmost brutality for forty years (573-613). There ensued a series of pillages of towns and monasteries, and of intrigues, murders—in which Frédégonde and Brunehaut played a large part—and massacres, which mark the decadence of the Merovingian domination. Sigebert had proved victorious, when he was struck down by daggers poisoned by Frédégonde (575). Chilperic, left master of the situation, entered Paris. Cruel, ambitious, debauched, avaricious, using justice and Church preferments as a means of extortion, he had yet some pretensions to literature; he held views on the Trinity, and was so far a feminist as to wish women to inherit land, contrary to the Salic Law. Gregory of Tours calls him the Nero and Herod of his age. He was a barbarian tyrant rendered doubly corrupt by civilization.

Guntram, who had inherited Orleans and the Valleys of the Rhone and Saône, was called the "Good," because he was free from the taint of Arian heresy; but he was almost equally cruel, and he was a prey to nervous terrors, such as beset Italian tyrants of a later day. To save his own kingdom he had taken the part of the weaker in the wars between the kingdoms of the East and West, Austrasia and Neustria. For the line of cleavage in the country, which had appeared early in the days of the Merovingian dynasty, showed deeper as time



STATUE OF FRÉDÉ-
GONDE.

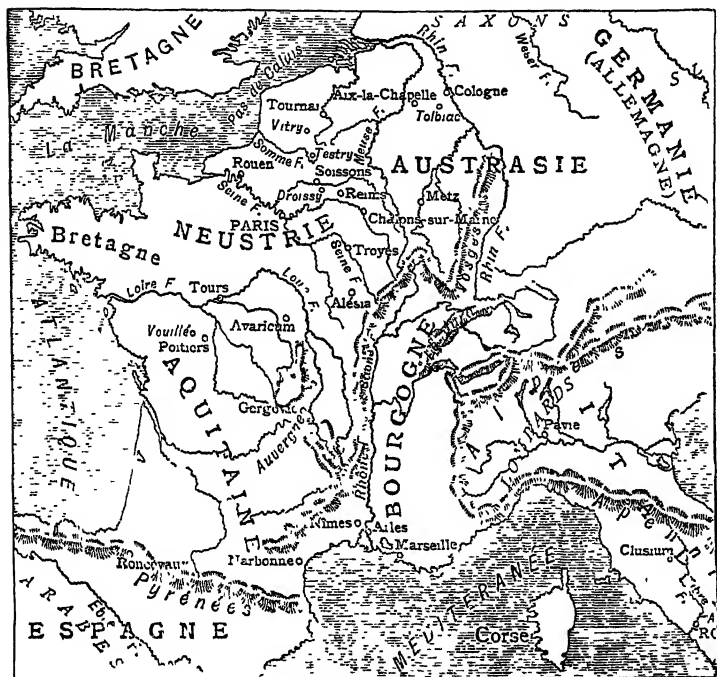
(In Notre Dame,
Paris.)

went on. Two separate kingdoms emerge as the result of these family feuds, and exhibit different characteristics. In the West, where the Franks were few, Roman usages mainly prevailed. Austrasia, on the contrary, was thoroughly Teutonized. And here, at least, the lives of the royal race reflect but too clearly the lives of their people. Crimes were frequent and brutally avenged. Life and property were utterly insecure. Under such conditions a new nobility found opportunities to increase their wealth and power through the possession of land and office, and the protection they were able to afford to the weaker.

As the Merovingians grew feebler and more ineffective, they bestowed their rights on Bishops, Seigneurs, Dukes, and Counts, in order to keep them faithful to the Crown. Society broke up into innumerable small groups of dependents, clustering round the rich and strong. The State ceased to be the centre of gravity, and a feudal polyarchy began to take the place of Roman centralization. By degrees the new nobility so formed grew strong enough to threaten the very existence of the royal power. But, as events turned out, they ended, through the rise of the great Carolingian family, in restoring the royal authority and in founding a new dynasty.

From the death of Sigebert the line of Merovingians lost vigour and authority. The name of Dagobert I. alone merits some mention, for he was a King who at least knew how to attempt to check the dismemberment of the Frankish kingdom by policy and arms, and who by his victories, administration of justice, legislation, and patronage of the Church, if not by his private life, earned, in contrast with his predecessors and successors, much of the praise which has been showered upon him (died 639). For the rest, premature marriage and precocious debauchery quickly sapped the vitality of the Merovingians.

King after King descended to the grave, dying of old age at twenty-five, and leaving sons begotten at fifteen to succeed them. They became mere figureheads, retaining by virtue of the long hair and flowing beards, which were the insignia of the Frankish monarchy, something



MAP OF GAUL.

Showing the new divisions—Austrasia, Neustria, Burgundy and Brittany—which, under the Franks, took the place of the Roman provinces.

of a sacrosanct character, as the personified Luck of the State, whilst the power which slipped from the hands of these sluggard or puppet Kings—*Rois Fainéants*—passed to the Mayors of the Palace (*Major Domus*).

All the resources and power of administration of the

kingdom were lodged in these officers of the royal household. They acted as the Representatives, then the Governors, at length almost as the Regents, of these feeble monarchs in Neustria, Burgundy, and Austrasia. They were also the chiefs of the new nobility. Once a year the King, clothed in royal robes, with his long fair hair streaming down his shoulders, like Absalom, might arrive in a chariot drawn by oxen to preside over the annual assembly of his people upon the Champ de Mars, and there, seated upon a golden throne, speak a few words to his subjects. But for the rest he would spend his time in hunting and debauchery, living upon the revenue which reached him through the Mayor.*

The inevitable tendency of an office of this character is to become hereditary, and then to usurp the throne. Grimoald, who had succeeded Pepin as Mayor of the Palace of Austrasia, made the attempt in 656, when, upon the death of Sigebert, he declared his son King. He was a hundred years ahead of his time, and paid for his precocity with his life. But in fact, if not yet in name, the Mayors were now petty Kings, and, as is the way of petty Kings, they warred against each other in order to increase their dignities and profits. At length the Battle of Testry (687) proved the turning-point, when Pepin II., of Heristal,† at the head of the organized nobles of Austrasia, established the ascendancy of the Carolingian family as hereditary Mayors of the Palace in Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy, and at the same time began to restore the unity of France. The Teutonic element had triumphed over the Roman. Pepin allied himself to the Church, and in this, as in the wars by which he reimposed the Frankish suzerainty over the outlying German

* Eginard.

† Descendant of Pepin I., through the female line, and of the son of the great rival house of Arnulf, Bishop of Metz.

provinces, he anticipated the policy which Charles Martel and Charlemagne were to pursue to its fulfilment. Under Pepin and his great sons Gaul was given once more a permanent political existence, but this time under a Teutonic race.

The position of the Carolingian House was rendered secure by Charles Martel. Pepin II. had left his infant grandson heir of Neustria and Austrasia under the regency of his wife Plectrudis. She threw Charles, Pepin's son by a concubine, Alphaida, into prison, fearing his prowess. But Neustria revolted from her rule, and Charles, escaping from prison, brought her to terms, and, after a three years' struggle, united Neustria and Austrasia under the nominal kingship of Clotair IV. He was preparing to subjugate the Frisians and Saxons and other German tribes who threatened invasion, as well as those outlying provinces, such as Alemannia, Aquitania, Bavaria, Thuringia, which had taken advantage of the dissensions amongst the Franks to resume their independence, under Dukes of their own, when he found himself face to face with a new danger to the Frankish realm. In 711 the Arabs had crossed the Straits of Gibraltar. They quickly mastered Spain, and swarmed over the Pyrenees.

Eudes (Odo), Duke of Aquitaine, was at this time beginning to despair of maintaining the autonomy of his vast duchy in the basin of the Rhone against the onslaught of Charles Martel. He invited the aid of an Emir of the North of Spain, who was in revolt against the legitimate representative of the Caliph of Damascus, Abd-el-Rahman (Abderrahman), and gave him his daughter in marriage. He soon found that he had put his money upon the wrong horse. Abd-el-Rahman invaded Aquitaine, defeated Eudes by the River Dronne, and occupied Bordeaux. Slaying and burning, he advanced

upon Poitiers and Tours, the sacred city of Christian Gaul. Eudes found himself obliged to entreat the aid of Charles Martel. He came, to fight one of the decisive battles of the world, at Cenon, near Poitiers. The stake was no longer the independence of Aquitaine or the supremacy of the Franks. The fate of Europe was to be determined upon the banks of the Vienne. It must be decided whether Europe should become a province of Asia.* The decision trembled in the balance. For a whole week the hosts of Christians and Mussulmans faced each other, as if hesitating to throw the dice and to settle an issue so tremendous. At length, upon October 17, 732, the foemen closed.

Charles Martel had massed his troops. Against the serried ranks of the Northmen the brilliant cavalry of the Saracens charged and hurled themselves in vain. It was as though the sun of Africa should attempt to thaw an iceberg in a day. When night fell the issue was yet in debate. Day dawned, and the Franks, seeing the tents of the enemy still unstruck, prepared to attack them. But when they drew near, they found the camp deserted. Abd-el-Rahman had been slain. The Saracens had fled. But they were still masters of Septimania. Repulsed from the north, they concentrated their efforts upon Provence. They seized Arles and Avignon, and from time to time ravaged and plundered Aquitania and Burgundy, harrying the Christians and their sanctuaries with fire and sword. But

* I think it is an exaggeration to dismiss Abd-el-Rahman's expedition as a mere plundering raid, and to give the whole credit of repelling the Arab invasion of the West to the stubborn resistance of Constantine IV. (677) and Leo the Isaurian (718) at Constantinople. Charles Martel's victory was at least as important as that of Marius and Catulus at Vercellæ, and, in its relation to the struggles before Constantinople, may well be compared with the Battle of the Raudine Plain in its relation to that of Aquæ Sertis.



Neurden Frères

THE ROMAN TRIUMPHAL ARCH AT ORANGE. *Pages 8 and 11.*

Probably built in A.D. 21 to commemorate the victory of the Romans over Sacrovir and Florus
in the reign of Tiberius

Charles Martel never rested from his task of expelling the infidels from France. It was a task rendered the more difficult by the disunion of the country. Many of the independent Counts and powerful families in Provence, dreading the dominion of the Franks, allied themselves with the Saracens. But Charles pressed on down the Rhone, took Avignon and marched upon Narbonne, and inflicted a heavy defeat upon the enemy outside its walls (737). Then he withdrew, destroying on his way the fortifications of Agde, Béziers, and Maguelonne, and setting fire to the amphitheatre at Nîmes, which had been converted into a fortress by the Saracens.

Two years later, in alliance with the Lombards, he hurled the wave of infidels back from the Rhone Valley for ever. Though bands of Arabs long continued to harry the coast and to maintain themselves in strongholds of brigandage in mountain fastnesses, such as Le Grand Fraxinet in Les Maures, to which they have given their name, the main issue had been decided by the hammer-strokes of the Frankish soldier. Meanwhile he had subdued Aquitaine. The Frankish domination was established once more throughout the whole of Gaul.

Towards the end of his life, the Popes Gregory II. and III. solicited the aid of the conqueror of Islam against the aggression of the Lombards. But Charles could not desert the allies who had helped him to expel the Saracens from Provence. The incident, however, is of importance, since it marks the beginning of pregnant relations between the Carolingians and the Papacy.

Charles Martel died in 741. Even he had not dared to assume the crown of the Franks. But on the death of King Thierry (737) he had left the throne vacant, in order to accustom the people to forget the Merovingian dynasty. When he died, his legitimate sons by Chrotrude—Carlo-

man and Pepin the Short (*le Bref*)—divided his States with Grippon, the bastard of Swanahild, his Bavarian concubine. But they soon quarrelled with him, and the revolt of Aquitania and Alemannia threw the Frankish realm once more into the melting-pot of civil war. Pepin and Carloman emerged victorious, having vanquished the Germans and crushed Grippon and the Duke of Aquitaine. Carloman retired to a monastery, and left Pepin sole master of the State (749). But it was not till he had obtained the consent of the Pope (Zacharias) that Pepin felt himself strong enough to convoke an assembly of the people at Soissons (751), who should elect him to the throne. With the assent of the Bishops and nobles, they raised their chosen King upon their shields in the old German fashion ; whilst Childeric and his son, the last of the Merovingian line, were solemnly shorn of their long royal hair and sent to a monastery. The new King showed his gratitude to the Church by endowing several monasteries, and reducing the Saxons to momentary tribute and Christianity at the point of the sword. In return for his undertaking to deliver the Papacy from the Lombards, Pope Stephen II. renewed the ceremony of the coronation, and again consecrated him with the “ Oil of Holy Anointing ” at Saint-Denis (July 28, 754). This rite had been performed by Boniface at Soissons, but was hitherto unknown in Gaul. It raised Pepin in the eyes of the people to the position of the Chosen of the Lord, and thus the Carolingians drew from Papal sanction the reverence hitherto monopolized by the long-haired Merovingian dynasty. Pepin redeemed his undertaking by two successful campaigns against the Lombards, which ended in their cession of part of the exarchate of Ravenna to the Pope, and in the secure foundation of the temporal principality of the Papacy.

Under Charles Martel and Pepin the Short the power

of the central government had been re-established. The nobles were brought to obedience, and the elements of dissolution checked. Narbonne, Aquitaine, and the Saxons, were reduced to subjection. The restoration of order, combined with the close alliance of the Carlovingians with the Church, led to a reform of the morals of the clergy. In 748 the ancient Church in Gaul, inspired by St. Boniface, decided to accept the authority of the Pontiff and the discipline of Rome. Carloman and Pepin, both sons of the Church and under the influence of St. Boniface, devoted themselves to the reform of the priests and the discipline of the monks, as well as to dealing with the scandal of laymen whose military services had been paid for by Charles Martel with ecclesiastical benefices, and who thought nothing of waging war against their brother Bishops or pillaging neighbouring monasteries. The servants of Christ were now forbidden to indulge in war, hunting, adultery, or fornication. The periodical Councils of the Church were re-established. The result was that the debauched and ignorant Merovingian clergy were soon succeeded by a more moral, a better educated, and therefore more politically influential priesthood—a priesthood which was at the same time more largely under the control of the Papacy.

IV

CHARLEMAGNE

A.D. 768—814

PEPIN THE SHORT on his deathbed had summoned the great ecclesiastics and laics to Saint-Denis, and with their consent had divided his realm between his two sons by Bertrada (768). Charles the Great (Charlemagne) received the north-western portion,* Carloman the south-east.† The revolt of Aquitania under Hunald was quickly suppressed by Charles. A divergence between the policy of the two brothers was soon made manifest. Whilst Charles sided with the Pope, Carloman allied himself with the Lombards. Bertrada, however, reconciled the brothers, and persuaded Charles to put aside his Frankish bride, and to marry Désirée, daughter of Didier, King of the Lombards, in spite of the passionate protest of the Pope. Carloman died in the following year (771), and Charlemagne, appearing near Laon, secured the allegiance of his brother's followers. Then he repudiated Désirée, and marched, in response to the Pope's appeal, to crush the Lombard King, who was endeavouring to complete the conquest of Italy. Pavia fell after a siege of nine months (June, 774). Didier ended his days in a monastery, and Charlemagne took the title of King of the

* Austrasia, Neustria north of the Oise, Aquitania, excepting the ecclesiastical province of Bourges.

† Burgundy, Provence, Septimania, Alsace, Alemannia, Thuringia, Hesse, Neustria south of the Oise, and Bourges.

Lombards. During the siege of Pavia Charlemagne had visited Rome, and there, as the devoted defender of the Holy See, he had cemented that alliance with the Papacy which was now the traditional policy of the Carolingians. Two subsequent campaigns in Italy (766, 767) completed the subjugation of the Lombards. But the conqueror wisely made no attempt to amalgamate his kingdoms north and south of the Alps.

From Italy, Charlemagne turned to Spain. His campaign there was little more than a raid, but it gave rise to an event great in history, because great in the poetry of France which it inspired. Spain was still in the hands of the Saracens. Charlemagne, surrounded by a band of chosen knights, called his Paladins, laid siege to Saragossa, but failed to take it. In his retreat to France, his rearguard was caught in a rocky defile south of the Pyrenees, the Valley of Roncevaux (Roncesvalles), and was destroyed to a man by the Basque mountaineers (778). Roland, said to be the nephew of Charlemagne, was in command. Finding himself hard pressed, it is said, he took out his magic ivory horn, Oliphant, and blew a great blast for help. Thrice he blew, and thrice Charlemagne heard his call. But he could not believe that he was in danger, or he thought that perchance he was a-hunting, and did not return till all was over. From a military point of view it was merely a regrettable incident, not a disaster. But the Battle of Roncevaux was magnified in popular imagination, probably because many of Charlemagne's intimate companions were slain there, and it presently gave rise to a whole epic of wonder and of lament—the *Iliad* of the Middle Ages, in which the spirit of the feudal aristocracy of the eleventh century is enshrined. The *Chanson de Roland* is an epic which expresses the Frankish ideal of military conquest and romantic heroism, an ideal at once national and religious,

embodying the vision of France as the champion of Christendom under Charlemagne, and, no less clearly, of St. Louis leading the Crusades.

From Spain, Charlemagne turned, more wisely and more seriously, to complete the subjugation of the Germans. From the Arabs in Spain there was at that time little danger of aggression. The eastern frontier was less secure. By a succession of bloodthirsty campaigns he reduced first the Bavarians (788), and at length the Saxons, to subjugation and Christianity. By infinite patience and repeated wars for over thirty years, he at last succeeded in incorporating them in the Frankish system, and so eliminated the real and pressing danger of the destruction of Frankish civilization in Gaul by a new influx of Teutonic invaders. He conquered the Baltic Slavs and the Spanish march, and reduced Bohemia and the distant Avars to subjection. Like Alfred, Charlemagne formed a fleet* to guard the mouths of the Rhone and the Garonne, and so to protect the north and west and the interior from pirates and from those Viking marauders whose raids he beheld with prophetic eye. Thus by 803 the frontiers of the Frankish Empire seemed to be secured, and from the Elbe and the Danube to the Atlantic, from the German Ocean to the Adriatic, there was at last one people nominally, at least, united under one Sovereign and by the same religion.

By the end of nearly fifty years of warfare Charlemagne had almost doubled his inheritance. These successes and his relations with the potentates of the East caused him to appear to his contemporaries to have established an almost world-wide empire. And, indeed, the Frankish realm had achieved a unity and an extent which entitled it to a comparison with the Western Empire of Rome.

* He reviewed it at Boulogne in 811, when the old Pharos of Caligula was restored.

In the eyes of the erudite, to whom the revival of letters had revealed the faded glories of the past, Charlemagne appeared as one of the greatest of the orthodox Emperors of Rome. The title alone was wanting. Nor was the title long denied. Leo III. was compelled to seek the protection of Charlemagne, and on Christmas Day, 800, he placed the imperial crown of the Romans upon the head of his protector in the basilica of St. Peter in Rome.

But to be a true Roman Emperor of the West it was necessary that he should be recognized at Constantinople as well as at Rome, for the Byzantine Emperors were the legitimate heirs of the Cæsars. To secure this end Charlemagne wrought with the aid of diplomacy and arms, until at length (812) a treaty was signed by which this recognition was affirmed, and, in theory at least, two Emperors of the East and West reigned side by side over a single and united empire. So far as words and ceremonies go, it was an accomplished fact. But in reality East had become East, and West West. The Roman Empire, with all its institutions and customs, had disappeared from the West in the course of the upheavals and resettlings of the last four centuries. Save in the fond imagination of a Charlemagne, and all those who looked wistfully for unity and peace, it could never return.

But the ceremony of the coronation in St. Peter's marked the introduction of a new political theory into Western Christendom—the theory of the Holy Roman Empire. According to this new theory, it was the function of the Emperor to protect the Church—a theory reversed in later days, when Popes mastered the State. But in 800, when Leo was seen upon his knees “adoring” the Emperor, men could not foresee Henry IV. standing in the snow at Canossa. It was the policy of Charlemagne to combine innumerable units, immeasurably diverse in race and language, by the link of a common Christianity

and to keep them united by the force of his mailed fist in a sort of federal union of vassal kingdoms. France, Italy, Bavaria, Aquitaine, and so forth, were to be mere branches of a great empire, administered by minor Kings. All alike must acknowledge Christianity and the authority of the Emperor, but with that proviso each was entitled to preserve the laws, customs, and language of his own people. The nations were not compelled to be Franks; every man might claim to be judged according to the law of his own country. As to the Christianity which Charlemagne imposed, it was merely the political Christianity of the Church—a society of priests and soldiers, in which the former prayed and the latter fought, and both alike were led by Emperor and Pope, the Moses and Aaron of a later dispensation.

Possessed by the idea of reconstituting the Roman Empire, and founding a more glorious Athens to the glory of God, Charlemagne turned his attention to the encouragement of letters, as the fitting appanage of a great reign, and as the means of providing instruction for the people in the knowledge of Christ. Amongst the Franks there were none capable of such teaching. Charlemagne accordingly invited to his kingdom scholars from Italy, Ireland, Scotland, or wherever they were to be found. But the teacher who exercised the greatest influence was Alcuin, a Northumbrian, who had studied at the school of York, and came to teach the children of the King and of his nobles in the palace of the King. Monastic and episcopal schools, too, were founded, by means of which, and through the channel of the Church, elementary knowledge of the “three R’s” and ecclesiastical music were diffused. Thus was brought about the little Renaissance of literature for which Charlemagne was directly responsible, and from which he derived his reward. For he is the hero of the chief work of the times,

figuring as the Augustus in the pages of a later Suetonius, the contemporary historian Eginard. Next to theology, history was the main product of the age. As for poetry, apart from versified theology and history, it consisted mainly of dreary imitations of Prudentius, Horace, Lucan, Ovid, or Virgil. All these works were composed, not in Frankish, or the tongue of the people, but in Silver Age Latin, the official language. But, unperturbed by literature, the tongue of the people was forming itself and spreading throughout Gaul—the Romance language, based on Latin, derived not from the polished periods of Cicero, but from the common speech of Cicero's slaves, mingled with native words and modified by the lips of the Celtic and Teutonic races. It was a process typical of a period when, under the government of Charlemagne, the Roman and German elements in Gaul were being rapidly fused into a common whole.

And this plebeian language had already, if not a literature, yet a song, the beginnings of a great poetry, which was destined to supplant the dying efforts of an imitated classicism. For the soldiers of Charlemagne chanted the high deeds of their mighty leader. The "Battle of Roncevaux" and the episodes of the wars with the Saxons were sung in native speech, in rough *chansons* or *cantilenæ*, and these ballads laid the foundation of French epic poetry as surely as the lays of Troy preceded and begot the epics of Homer.

The *Chansons de Gestes* are narrative poems dealing with French history. They were composed and sung by troubadours, trouvères, and jongleurs, and date in their present form from the eleventh century. The most famous of them is that *Chanson de Roland* to which we have already referred, the epic which was presently evolved and elaborated from such simple beginnings, and based on the historical foundation of Eginhard's his-

tory—a poem wholly warlike and religious in tone, a true echo of the Carlovingian age, in which touches of gallantry and the softer emotions are conspicuous by their absence.



BUST OF CHARLEMAGNE.

At Aix-la-Chapelle. (Hachette et Cie.)

In these *chansons* the working of popular imagination upon the facts of history is shown as clearly and strikingly as the working of history upon the imagination of Charle-

magne and those who, with him or for him, dreamed of re-establishing a united Roman Empire, blessed with Christianity and the *Pax Romana*.

Though Charlemagne himself never learned to write—a manual exercise in itself without charm and with little significance when a man has secretaries always at hand—he was not therefore illiterate. He knew Latin and a little Greek, studied rhetoric and astronomy, and had a passion for history and theology. Terrible in war, he proved himself a great statesman as well as a great warrior, not only in the direction of his arms, but also in his treatment of the vanquished. His conquests, as we have seen, were mainly concerned with the consolidation of his realm and the strengthening of its frontiers. His campaigns were waged with extraordinary perseverance by himself or by his generals, such as Roland or Guillaume de Toulouse. But, in spite of their prolonged and obstinate resistance, he left the Saxons in full enjoyment of their laws and customs, though not of their religion, whilst introducing the Frankish division into counties, with their hierarchy of Counts and *Centenarii*. The same policy of pacification was pursued in Lombardy and Aquitaine. In his administration, as in his campaigns, he proved himself a great worker and ruler rather than a great innovator.

He showed his genius as a conqueror in directing his forces against the greatest source of danger, and his genius as a statesman in moulding and developing the existing tendencies and forms of government. He adapted to the service of the State the new conditions which were heading for feudalism. Duchies were abolished, for the growth of large semi-independent provinces was inconsistent with the unity of the empire. The realm was administered by one system. *Grafs*, or Counts, were appointed over each province, whose duty it was to administer justice

and collect taxes. This was no innovation, for, as we have seen, the Grafs were the chief executive officers of the early Frankish State. But as their wealth and powers had increased it had become increasingly necessary to exercise control over them in their relation to their subordinates, and to bring them into touch with the central government. For this purpose Charlemagne sent *Missi* on annual circuit to supervise them—inspectors who visited the provinces as his representatives, heard appeals, and reported to the King whether the Counts were doing their duty. Charlemagne showed his practical statesmanship in using for this new office the existing institution of *Missi dominici*, or royal messengers, whom earlier Kings had been wont to send out upon special missions. In a similar way, the freemen of the *Mâl*, or Frankish Court, were supervised by *scabini* (doomsmen), appointed by the *Missi*.

More open to criticism as a measure of political wisdom, but one equally consonant with the tradition of Charlemagne's predecessors and with his wider policy of uniting Church and State, was the calling in of the Bishops to aid in this task of supervising the Counts. In return for their unflagging support throughout the empire, Charlemagne made the clergy independent of the secular courts, and gave them a wide jurisdiction in civil causes. The result was to encourage the secularization of the clergy; for a twofold jurisdiction was established, Counts and Bishops being set up in rivalry in each town or district, the Bishops administering Roman law, and the Counts the Frankish; and the latter representing the Frankish, the former the Roman, element of the population.

To protect the frontiers, Charlemagne, like William the Conqueror, organized a series of marches (*Mark*)—districts comprising several counties which were placed under Prefects of the Marches, known later as Margraves

(*Mark Grafts*). Roland was Prefect of the March of Bretagne. Later on States grew out of these military cantons. Margravates were the cradles of Austria and Prussia. All alike were subject to the general ordinances of the realm.

It had been the custom of the Merovingians to hold annual gatherings of the people, general assemblies which formed the principal channel of government. Charlemagne continued this custom.* In theory the whole people was summoned to attend upon the King at some palace or royal town where he might happen to be. In practice, of course, the people could not all assemble at Ratisbon or Aix. But Bishops, Abbots, and Counts arrived with their followings, who represented the people. The chief among these met in the council-halls, and deliberated upon the proposals submitted to them. Charlemagne mingled familiarly with the crowd of lesser dignitaries without, and attended the deliberations of the great within, if they so desired. They submitted their opinion to him, and he then made his decision, and announced it to the people for their consent—that is to say, for their obedience. The decrees thus passed regulated the affairs of the nation for the coming year, and were known as *Capitularia*. Gradually they would form a constitution and a code. But it should be observed that the Carolingian constitution was not so democratic in fact as might be inferred from the deliberative and judicial functions of this general assembly. For the matters laid before them had been decided previously in the King's secret probouleutic or preconsidering councils; so that in practice the function of the assemblies would be, so far as legislation was concerned, merely to ratify and publish the measures prepared beforehand by the aristocratic counsellors of the King.

* They were usually held in May, and known as "Fields of May"—Champs du Mai.

Charlemagne, whose favourite pastimes were bathing and the chase, chose for his political capital an old Roman bathing-station, surrounded by forests teeming with game. At Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) he founded a city so magnificent that its walls and palace, adorned with the spoils of the palace of Theodoric at Ravenna, and the splendid church which gave the place its name, seemed to suggest a second Rome, fitting seat of the new Roman Emperor.

Planned like San Vitale at Ravenna, where Theodoric had introduced the Byzantine art of Constantinople, Charlemagne's monumental church was the chief centre for diffusing the influence of Eastern art through Western Europe at a time when Roman traditions had fallen into almost complete decay. It was here that Charlemagne was buried. He died in January, 814. A few months previously he had summoned a general assembly at the capital. There a decree was published "to satisfy the needs of the Church of God and the Christian people"; and then in the Church of Aix, with the assent of the people, Charlemagne, after remaining a long time in prayer, turned to his sole surviving son, Louis, and, after exhorting him to love God and honour His churches, he placed the crown of gold upon his head. And all the people cried aloud: "God save the Emperor Louis!" The kingdom of Italy was assigned to Bernard, the son of Pepin.*

The attempt of Charlemagne ended in failure. Time was not granted him to constitute such a fusion of races and such a solidarity of law and administration as would withstand the influences of disorder and disintegration to which his empire was so soon to be exposed. His con-

* Charlemagne married (1) Désirée (repudiated), (2) Hildegarde, (3) Fastrada, (4) Liutgarde, besides several concubines. His daughters he did not allow to marry. His three sons—Charles, Pepin, and Louis—were all by Hildegarde.

quest of the Saxons and his revival of the schools remained, indeed, a permanent and fruitful contribution to civilization. But his political expedients, like the institution of the *Missi*, disappeared with the strong government of which they were a part. Yet he had at least constructed and maintained a really strong central government for a generation ; and though this was soon to disappear, along with the empire which he had created, yet the ideal he had realized remained—the ideal of a King and a strong government—and it survived even through the succeeding ages of anarchy. In the days of feudal disorder men still looked back to this period as a Golden Age, which shone forth as the example of what was best worth striving for in the evolution of politics. And such an ideal could not but exercise a vast influence upon the destinies of France.

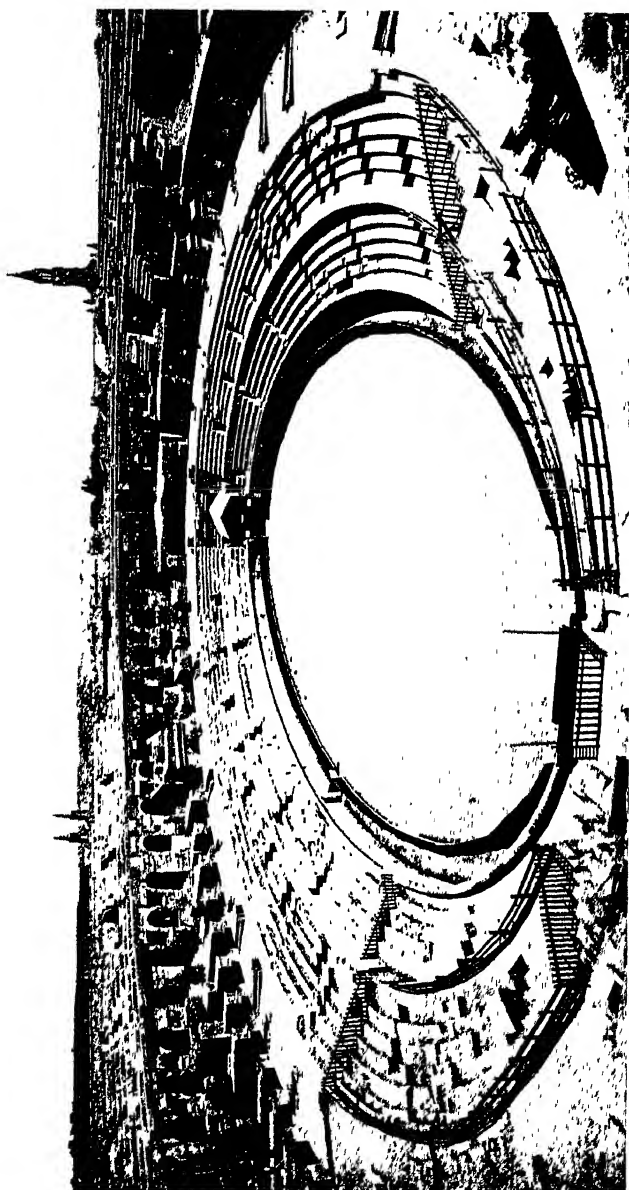
Besides this, the grandeur of the moral idea of making his empire one great Christian State—a City of God—which appears to have inspired him, has rightly imparted a lustre to the reputation of Charlemagne, and has enhanced the greatness of his achievements, great as they were, in the eyes of the world. It lent a glamour to his name, which grew more effulgent as it shone across the abysmal chaos of succeeding ages. To the poets of the *Gestes* and popular tradition he appeared more than human—a hero, in stature as in achievement, greater than men now are. It seemed impossible that such a man must die. The legend grew up that, in the vault of his chapel at Aix, the Emperor was but waiting till the world's great age should begin anew ; that there, clad in the imperial insignia, seated on his throne, his good sword *Joyeuse* by his side, his sceptre in his hand, the Gospel on his knees, the heir at once of Pepin and Augustus, of David and of Solomon, he was waiting to come again and rule with all the glory of a King of Kings.

V

THE RISE OF FEUDALISM

A.D. 814—912

THE death of Charlemagne led almost immediately to the dismemberment of his empire. Only a ruler of his exceptional energy and force of character could have continued and completed his task of consolidating Western Christendom under an Emperor and his subject Kings. His son, Louis the Pious, had many virtues : he was generous, tolerant, moral, well educated, and a mighty hunter ; but the epithet of *Débonnaire*, which he earned at his Court, indicates his want of steadfast purpose and power of will. He lacked the supreme qualities needed to reduce to discipline the varying units of the vast empire which his father had begun to weld together. The control of affairs passed out of his hands to the Bishops, the nobles, his sons, and even his wife. And the process of disintegration, inevitable in the absence of a strong ruler, was hastened by his death (840) ; for his three sons, Lothair, Louis, and Charles-le-Chauve (the Bald), began to fight amongst themselves over their inheritance, whilst the nobles ranged themselves under their banners, according as each promised them lands and honours. After a preliminary struggle, Louis and Charles bound themselves by an oath in the plain of Strasburg against their brother Lothair. This alliance led to the conclusion of the Treaty of Verdun in the following year (843).



Neurden Fries

THE ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE AT NÎMES. Pages 10 and 16

It is the best preserved of all the Roman arenas, and was built in the first or second century of the Christian era. It accommodated about 22,000 people.

The Oath of Strasburg is of interest, because it is the oldest monument of the French language in existence. The Treaty of Verdun marks the end of the united empire of Charlemagne, and the beginning of the history of Italy, France, and Germany as separate kingdoms ; for by this treaty Charles-le-Chauve received the whole of the country to the west of the Meuse, Seine, and Rhone. And France—*Francia*, the kingdom of the Franks—a term which had followed the conquering race from Franconia across the Rhine, and, spreading with the victories of Clovis to the Loire, had embraced under Charlemagne the whole Frankish realm, with the exception of Italy, now began to be restricted to this western part of Charlemagne's empire which was the portion of Charles-le-Chauve, the "sweet realm of France," bounded by the Scheldt, Ebro, Meuse, and Atlantic. In a special sense it was still further restricted to the Île de France, the country between the Oise, the Seine, and the Marne, which had formed the heart of the Merovingian power.

Charles-le-Chauve was a man of ability, education, and taste. He succeeded in establishing himself as King of Lorraine, King of Italy, and Emperor. But within this kingdom of Western France he utterly failed to enforce any homogeneity or order, or even to secure his subjects against the raids of foreign foes. By the time the partition of Verdun had settled the limits of his kingdom, the disorder of the civil wars, which had preceded it, had enabled the two evils, which were to destroy the Carolingian power, to develop beyond his control. The countries united under his crown were united only in name. Brittany, for instance, and Aquitaine, formed separate entities, sharply distinguished by manners, language, and history from the Île de France. Burgundy was relapsing into a state of utter anarchy. And whilst the country was rendered insecure by roving bands of

brigands, composed of freemen who had lost their all in the disorders of the times, the richer and more powerful had availed themselves of their opportunity to acquire wealth and privileges. The practice of "commendation" grew. The harassed poor turned to the wealthy landowner for protection, only there to be found. Dukes and Counts, taking advantage of the weakness of the central power, made their positions hereditary and practically independent. Feudal principalities sprang up.

Moreover, the boundaries of the kingdom of Western France were the Atlantic, the Channel, the Mediterranean, the Ebro. But oceans and rivers were boundaries that were no bulwarks against Northmen, the Vikings, the Scandinavian pirates, who since about the year 800 had begun to attack the fair realm of France from north and south.

It is said that Charlemagne, when first he beheld the curved prows of a Viking fleet far out at sea, shed tears, and exclaimed: "I am exceeding sorrowful, for I perceive what woes these folk will bring upon my people."

Tall and strong, with fair hair and blue eyes, the Norsemen from Scandinavia and Denmark now descended upon a land divided against itself, and denuded of warriors by internecine warfare. The business and the creed of these fierce sons of the sea was war and bloodshed; for they believed in a god, Odin, who delighted in the blood of men, and thought that warriors who died in battle were received in Valhalla (the Hall of Heroes), there to feast for ever upon boar's flesh and mead. Their ships, with a dragon for their figurehead, and their sides gleaming with the bucklers of seventy Vikings apiece, bore them up the Seine, the Somme, the Loire, or the Garonne, where the towns, which had neither walls in repair nor defenders organized to resist them, lay at their mercy. For the rivers served them as highroads which led to the gates of

the rich abbeys and the scattered towns. At the sight of the black sails of their dragon ships the peasants fled to the woods and the townsfolk to the churches, too often to find death in the flames; whilst the ruthless pirates plundered and pillaged and burned, stabling their horses by the altars, and singing the mass of swords, as they boasted, in the shrines of peace. They plundered Aachen itself, and outraged the Dome which Charlemagne had built. Presently the Northmen began to give up returning to their dark and sterile homes in the winter, as they had been wont, and settled down at the mouths of the rivers—as, for instance, near Rouen—choosing here, as in their Northern homes, those little anchorage grounds from which they derived their names, Vikings, children of the creeks and fjords.

Charles tried the most fatal of all methods to rid his country of this pest. He bought the marauders off with gold—the most certain means of insuring their return. The sturdiest resistance was offered to them by Robert the Strong, the ancestor of the Capetians, whose courage Charles rewarded with the gift of several counties. He appointed him to defend the country between the Loire and the Seine against the Northmen and Bretons, a great number of whom, along with many native brigands, had joined the pirates in these troublous times. This command developed into a great fief—the Grand-Duchy of France—from which was to spring the third line of France. Robert was slain by Hastings in 866, on his return from Italy. He had attacked the Northmen after they had pillaged Le Mans. They barricaded themselves in the church of Brissarthe, and by a sudden sally caught the gallant Robert unawares.

When Alfred of England had come to terms with them, the Northmen returned again to France in force, apparently with the intention of settling there; and though

Louis III. and the Franks defeated them with great slaughter at Saucourt, near Abbeville, in 881, a great host of them reappeared a few years later under Siegfried, and encamped before Paris (885). Their huge fleet covered the Seine for two leagues below the city. The citizens, who had sought refuge within the old Roman enceinte, asked in terror what had become of their river, for naught but the ships of the Vikings could be seen. It was a critical moment in the history of France. Was she, like England, to purchase unity at the price of a Norman Conquest? Charles the Bald had been succeeded (877) by his son, Louis II. le Bègue (the Stammerer), who had died in 879. The deaths of his two elder sons, Louis III. and Carloman, who had divided the kingdom between them, had left his third son, Charles the Simple, heir to the throne (884). He was only an infant. And so, whilst the bridges which Charles the Bald had fortified held the Northmen at bay, Odo (Eudes), Count of Paris, son of Robert the Strong, and the Bishop of Gozlin, threw themselves into the city to conduct its defence.

Resistance was maintained with the most desperate heroism. After some months of preparation, during which the Normans entrenched themselves about the city, they delivered two assaults. They were repulsed, but the defence was hopeless, unless relief should come from without. Charles the Fat, grandson of Louis le Débonnaire, Emperor and King of Germany, a devout but feeble creature, had been invited by a meeting of the nobles under Hugh the Abbot to come to the relief of France. But the Emperor delayed. Hugh the Abbot and the Bishop of Gozlin died. The misery of the besieged grew extreme. At last the brave Count Odo, the hero of the defence, made his way out through the lines of the Northmen to summon Charles the Fat in person. He returned so soon as his embassy was accomplished. But it was yet many

months before the Emperor arrived with a large army from Germany, and even then it was not to fight, but to buy off Siegfried by giving him Burgundy to plunder. The cowardice and incapacity of the Emperor stood out in strong contrast with the energy and courageous devotion of the Count of Paris. Paris by its heroism had won its title to be the capital of France, and Odo by his heroic qualities the right to be the first French King.

Charles the Simple was still a boy. The Normans were swarming over France. The Bishops, Counts, and Seigneurs, assembled therefore at Tribur (887), and, having deposed Charles the Fat, elected Odo to be their King and champion against the Scandinavian foe.

In 889 the Danes again laid siege to Paris for three months. They were bought off, but Odo inflicted a crushing defeat upon them at Montpensier. Meantime Charles the Fat had died childless (888), and the dismemberment of the empire of Charlemagne proceeded apace. Poets and historians, looking back to the great days of Charlemagne, bewailed the glory that was past. "The unity of the empire has departed. Instead of Kings, there are but kinglets ; in place of a kingdom, only the fragments of a kingdom." From Western France the kingdoms of Italy, Germany, Lorraine, Navarre, Burgundy, and Provence split off. The two latter were united under Rudolph II. (933), and presently, taking from their capital the title of the Kingdom of Arles, achieved an independent existence under German domination. Western France, indeed, so weak was it and disorganized, might easily have followed suit, and fallen under the suzerainty of Germany.*

Count Odo failed to maintain the position he had won. The feudal spirit which had brought him to the throne broke his power when he tried to exercise the royal

* See Lavissee, II. i. 399.

authority in earnest over it. Moreover, the Germanic faction, which favoured the Carolingian dynasty, increased in strength as Charles the Simple grew in years. After a period of struggle, Count Odo, who was childless, was obliged to make a compact, as the result of which Charles succeeded to the throne of France upon Odo's death in 898. Charles, in return, confirmed to Robert all the dignities of his brother Odo. As Count of Paris, Anjou, Touraine, and Blois, the possessor of many rich abbeys and benefices, and of the military command of the country between the Seine and the Loire, Robert thus became by far the most powerful Seigneur in France.

Charles the Simple, in spite of his contemptuous nickname, solved the problem of his age. The Norman invasions were still following one another like the waves of the sea, devastating the country. The ruthless invaders pillaged and burned churches, monasteries, and villages. In 910, Rollo, ancestor of William the Conqueror, appeared before Paris. He was repulsed, and turned to ravage the Chartrain country. The people of La Beauce fled to the forests and the churches for refuge; but the forests were soon in flames, and the churches were destroyed. The refugees fled to Chartres for the shelter of her walls and the succour of her church and saintly relics. Robert, Count of Paris, the Duke of Burgundy, and the Count of Poitiers, hastened to their relief, and the Normans were beaten back. Charles seized the opportunity to treat with Rollo at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte. The Normans, united under that great sea-King, had long regarded Neustria as their own. They had been settling there for a generation. Charles now formally handed over to them the district of the Lower Seine, with Rouen for a centre. In return for this fief and Charles' daughter, Rollo promised to cease from his raids and to embrace Christianity.

On the borders of Neustria he did homage to his

suzerain lord. But, too proud to kiss the King's foot in token of this homage, he deputed a follower to perform the distasteful act. The rough Northman, instead of kneeling, seized the King's foot in his hand, and, raising it to his lips, sent the King sprawling on his back (912).

Rollo, however, kept to the spirit of his contract. The heathen Northern pirates became French Christians, their descendants feudal nobles, and Pirates' Land the most loyal of the fiefs of France. Normandy formed a bulwark between Paris and the sea. And the energy and roving spirit of the Northmen was directed henceforth towards the aggrandizement of France, not her ruin. The Normans were soon to conquer England and Sicily, and to lead the way in the Crusades.

Rollo, who took the name of Robert upon his conversion, established law and order throughout Normandy. Soon, it is said, a child with a purse of gold in its hand could in safety cross the land which for generations had been a mere desert of ashes. Robert's subjects rapidly adopted the French tongue. Christianity was embraced by all, from Duke to peasant. By the people it was welcomed with an almost passionate fanaticism.

After a nightmare of rapine and disorder, of war and rumours of war, which had encouraged the belief that the year 1000 would see the end of the world, the people began to breathe afresh. They had prepared for the millennium by every practice of penance and mortification. Now that they had escaped it, they turned to record their gratitude to the God of Christendom. Every road was crowded with pilgrims. Monasteries, which had long been the sole repositories of learning, rose in every glade, cathedrals in every town. The world roused itself, says the chronicler Raoul Glaber, in a fine phrase, and, casting off its rags, put on the white robe of the churches. The abbey-churches of Jumièges (*circa* 1040)

and Caen (1064) bore witness to the might of new settlers in France, as surely as the Dom at Aix-la-Chapelle to that of the vanished empire of Charlemagne. This restoration of religious centres meant in a brutal age the assertion of the claims of humanity, and in an age of ignorance the encouragement of learning, commerce, science, and art. Windmills, winepresses, tanneries, sprang up on every side of them, and on every side, too, the castles of the nobles. It is the age of castles. The impregnable fortress perched on the sheer cliff of Falaise,* where Robert the Devil begat William the Conqueror, is at least as typical of the time as the Norman cathedrals.

For the failure of the Carolingians in the first duty of government, to protect their subjects against the frightful brigandage and appalling devastation in the era of the Northmen's raids, had resulted in the erection of innumerable feudal strongholds. France bristled with the little capitals of feudal seigneuries, to which the inhabitants of the surrounding district fled at the approach of an enemy. These castles, which the peasants helped to build with willing labour as their only refuge, were destined to become in time the dominating factor in their oppression, and to be torn to pieces at last by the infuriated mobs of their revolted descendants.

For France was now in the iron grip of feudalism. This was the native land of the feudal system, and here it was developed earliest and most completely. Feudalism† involved, in theory at least, a twofold relationship :

* Falaise and Loches are the earliest fortresses in which Byzantine influence can be clearly traced.

† It is not within the scope of this volume to give a full account of the origin and details of the feudal system. I must be content to refer the reader to Stubbs' *Constitutional History* and an admirable chapter (ix.) in Professor Adams' *Civilization during the Middle Ages* (1910).

on the one hand was the tenure of the land, by which the vassal held a benefice or "fief" (*feodum*) from his lord ; on the other was the bond of mutual service and protection, which united lord and vassal as the condition of that tenure.

And since the same man who was lord of one vassal was himself, by virtue of his tenure, vassal of another lord, the whole of society was bound together by the grades of the feudal hierarchy. This was the virtue of feudalism. It was at least a political system which preserved the existence of the State as a whole, though it was divided into a myriad fragments.

Thanks to the anarchy of the ninth and tenth centuries, then, the feudal system supplanted the old monarchical régime. But that system did not spring into existence in a day. The process had begun under the Merovingians, and even before them, but had been held in check by Charlemagne and his immediate successors. In times of stress and danger freemen became clients of the great ; the weaker ranged themselves under the banner of the stronger. The small landowner, exposed to the brigandage of wandering bands, unprotected by the central authority, at the mercy of the neighbouring Count or any wandering brigand, turned for protection to the strong man in his neighbourhood, who protected him against others of his kindred. Abandoned by the State, he abandoned it in turn, and, fearing to lose his land altogether, surrendered it to the larger landowner, and received it back upon condition of service, binding himself by an oath of fidelity in a new relationship to an individual in return for a promise of protection. The large landowners, thus increasing their possessions, began to be less subject to the central authority. And whilst the Church began to hold benefices, the Kings, in order to purchase support, divested themselves of their royal rights in favour

of the Church and nobles. These processes continued at intervals, and developed into the feudal system.

When Northmen, Arabs, and Hungarians began to invade the country, and there was no protection from the soldiers or fortresses of the King, the necessity of organizing into groups increased.

Vassalage, which was a social fact under the Merovingians, was recognized and sanctioned by the Carolingians. The great Carolingians, as we have seen, were obliged to acknowledge and strengthen the growing feudal institutions, and to give them legality, though as statesmen they continued to subordinate them to the State. The steps in the progress by which these growing customs were acknowledged are marked, for instance, by the Edict (or Capitulary) of Mersen (847) and the Edict of Quiersy (877). By the first it is recognized that every freeman may choose a lord, either the King or one of his vassals, and granted that no vassal of the King should be obliged to follow him in war, unless against a foreign enemy. By the second, Charles the Bald, on the eve of his departure for Italy, purchased the assistance of the nobles by at least a momentary recognition of hereditary right to benefices. Already, by the death of Charlemagne, almost all freemen were vassals. So it came about that the King had presently two sorts of subjects—vassals whom he governed as Seigneur, and subjects whom he ruled by his right as King or Emperor.

With the increasing disorders of the Carolingian times, the King, as Seigneur, found he had as great need of his vassals as they had of him. In order to increase the group of his retainers and secure their aid, he was forced to make bargains in land. The vassal pledged his service in return for benefice of land. It was a contract for life only, but the land carried the service if the contract was renewed by the heir. So the principle of feudal service

owed in return for lands received was extended to the relations of King and Church and Counts, who held from the King, as much as to their tenants. A hierarchy was thus established, at the summit of which was the King as Seigneur of Seigneurs—the supreme Suzerain.

As time went on, the fief tended to become more definitely hereditary, homage being done on accession as a formality. Thus the Counts appropriated the rights which they had held as delegates from the Crown, and held them as hereditary. The Carolingians, when they no longer had lands to give and must give something, ceded the rights of justice and revenue and immunity from royal authority. The Dukes and Counts, who had judged formerly in the name of the King, administered justice now in their own names; levied and appropriated for their own use the tolls they had formerly collected for the royal exchequer; and collected armies, but led them, not to the King, but on their own expeditions. They enforced new rights, and became masters in their own counties, Kings in their own *pagus*, Kings *chez lui*. Bishops, too, appropriated the royal authority and the rights conceded or delegated to them by the Kings.

The justice so administered by the Counts and Seigneurs over their vassals was based on a customary law, and was regarded by them chiefly as a means of revenue, based on a scale of fines. These profitable rights of justice were annexed to a fief, and were split up like other feudal rights, passing with the property, and being divided amongst the heirs.

Thus an extraordinary network or mosaic of fiefs was spread over the whole of France, comprising immense duchies and tiny holdings alike.

In the first rank of this feudal scale were such great feudatories as the Count of Brittany or the Duke of

Gascony, the Dukes of Burgundy and Aquitaine and Normandy, the Counts of Flanders, Blois, Anjou, Toulouse, and Barcelona, who were all, by virtue of the rights they had received or wrested from the Kings, practically, to a greater or less degree, the heads of separate and independent nations. In the second rank was a number of lesser Counts—from Vermandois to Carcassonne, from Nevers to Périgord or Nîmes—who owed their varying degrees of independence to the strength of their castles, the topography of the district, or the weakness of their suzerains. Side by side with these must be reckoned the crowd of Bishops and Archbishops, Kings with two faces, armed with the sword as well as with the cross, who had added to the power of the Church the privileges they had wrested first from the Kings and then from the Counts.

At the foot of the scale are the smaller seigneuries of the "châtelains," and Viscounts, the subordinates of the Carolingian Counts, who by the usurpation of the rights of justice and hereditary have become almost independent of them. Secure in their castles, they live by pillage and theft, at the expense of the peasants they oppress, the monks they despoil, and the Counts and Bishops they harass. For two centuries to come their constant brigandage is the chief plague of feudalism, which the Kings and high Barons strive in vain to repress.

In many of the old walled towns of France we still can see a castle, with its crenellated donjon, its massive walls and machicolated entrance-gates, and side by side a cathedral, with its soaring spires, majestic nave, painted windows, and mystic sculptures. They are typical, in their juxtaposition, of the temporal and spiritual powers which divided the sway of the land; for throughout the Middle Ages, side by side with the persistent power of the Bishops and their train of clergy and serfs, persisted

also, but waxing and waning with varying fortune, the power of the Counts. From the vassals and dependents of these two powers was destined to spring the modern *bourgeoisie*. The Counts pass before us in the vista of history, for ever raising levies, waging wars, and exacting tolls of merchandise. Sometimes they are in accord with the clergy, sometimes in opposition; at one moment they make large donations to the Church, at another rob it. To-day they fight for their King abroad and on their Crusades, while Viscounts represent them, somewhat feebly as a rule, at home. To-morrow they are home again, fighting among themselves, or trying to throw off their allegiance to their King. War and brigandage are mainly their business. They pillage the



PLOUGHING IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Bishops, and the Bishops excommunicate the pillagers. They raise troops, and the Bishops call their parishioners to arms. They war with the sword only, but the Bishops win with the aid of their pens also, the cunning of their counsel, and the power of the Church. But during this period of disorder the serf waged with his master the same struggle as the vassal was waging with his lord, the lord with the King. The result was similar in all cases. Usurpation of servile tenures accompanied that of liberal tenures, and territorial appropriation having taken place in every rank of society, it was as difficult to dispossess a serf of his manse as a seigneur of his benefice. The serf, therefore, emerged from the condition

of almost absolute slavery in which he was at the fall of the Western Empire, and from the condition of servitude that had been his up to the end of the reign of Charles the Bald. Servitude was transformed into serfage. The serf, having withdrawn his person and his field from his master's hands, owes to him no longer his body and goods, but only a portion of his labour and income. He ceases to be a slave and becomes a tributary.

With the advent of feudalism the map of the country underwent a change. The Roman arrangement, by which Gaul had been divided into 18 provinces and 127 dioceses, had been little altered by the Franks, but gradually disappeared in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It was preserved only by the Church, the dioceses of which up to the time of the Revolution represented very nearly the ancient divisions of Gaul under the Romans. Before the days of Cæsar it was into *pagi* that Gaul had been divided. The *pagus*, or *pays*, persisted now; more numerous than the cities, they continued to split up and multiply. But from about A.D. 800 onwards they became identified with *comtés*, or counties, of the same name and extent, as the comté of Chartres, etc.

From this period of feudal disintegration there emerges a period of reconstruction, when, by a process of marriages, alliances, wars, and the construction of castles, great fiefs like the county of Anjou are formed; and through feudalism the King, despoiled of all his regalian rights, reconstructs his royal authority. As a feudal lord himself, and as Suzerain of all the fiefs, he draws revenue, exercises his devolved rights, and enforces his authority over the neighbouring duchies and counties. As the head of feudalism, he regains once more the authority he had lost as King, whilst as the representative of an extra-feudal kingship, the heir of Charlemagne, and the descendant of the Roman Cæsars, with theoretical powers

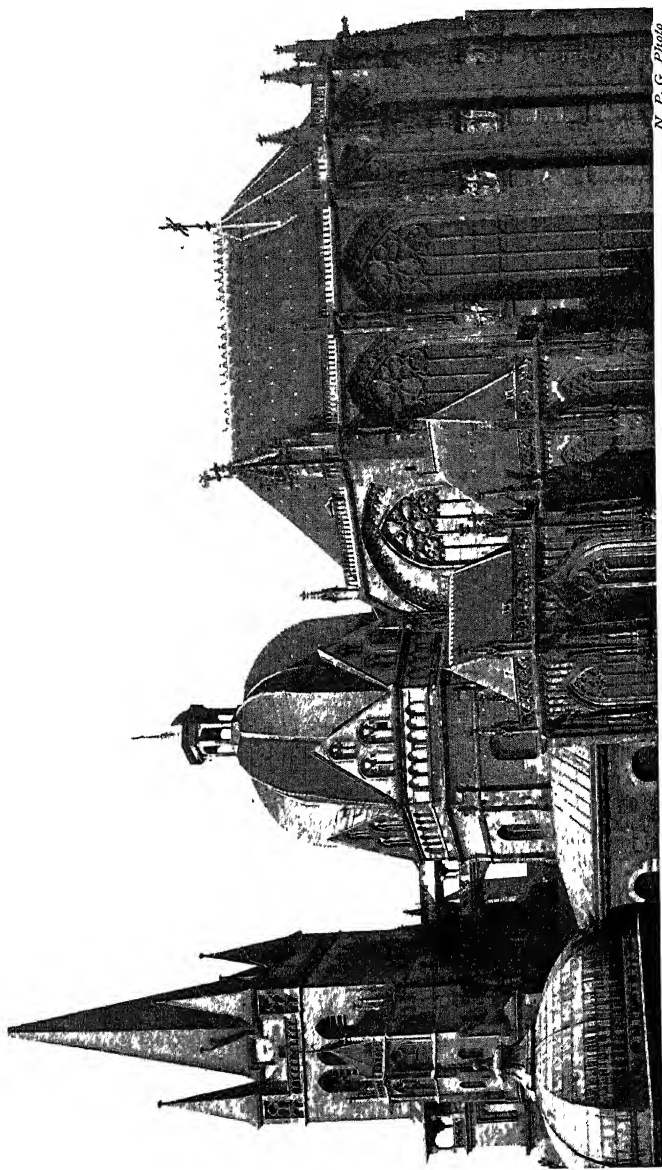
of justice and war in defence of his people, and as the anointed of God at Rheims, the representative of Heaven and the hope of the Church, the means are ready to his hand for re-establishing the royal authority. But this period was not yet. It was the task of a new dynasty, begotten of feudalism itself, to found the absolute monarchy of France.

VI

THE DYNASTY OF THE CAPETS, AND THE CRUSADES A.D. 912—1108

CHARLES THE SIMPLE recovered the kingship of Lorraine. His preference for that kingdom, combined with other grievances, led to a revolt of the Barons of Western France, who elected Count Robert of Paris King (922). Count Robert was slain at the Battle of Soissons in the following year—a battle which ended, however, in the discomfiture of Charles' troops. The Barons elected Rudolph, Duke of Burgundy, his son-in-law, to reign in his stead. Charles was seized, and kept in prison till his death at Péronne in 929. Rudolph could not make good his hold over Lorraine, which passed to Henry I. of Germany, and became a German duchy. But he forced the Normans to do him homage, and extended his dominions in the south before he died, suddenly and childless, in 936. Hugh, son of Robert, Count of Paris, seemed his obvious successor. But he could only calculate upon the opposition of other Counts who were his equals, and each of whom would deem himself his superior. He chose rather, and more prudently, to summon his nephew, the son of Charles the Simple, to the vacant throne from the Court of Athelstan. "Louis from beyond the Seas" (*d'outre Mer*) was consecrated at Laon 936, and received the homage of the Barons. Hugh no doubt expected to rule without risk through him, using his own influence as "Duke of the French."

But Louis *d'Outre-Mer* was not content to be a mere



N. P. G. Photo

THE CATHEDRAL AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE. Page 46.

The octagonal portion under the dome was built by Charlemagne between 790 and 814 as a royal tomb-house, and in it his body was placed seated on his throne, and wearing his crown and imperial robes.

puppet in the hands of Hugh the Great. A struggle took place between the two for supremacy. Louis, having secured the support of Otho of Germany, gained the upper hand, and Hugh was obliged to submit. But whilst the Grands Seigneurs, like the Duke of Normandy or Aquitaine, did homage to Louis, and recognized him as their Suzerain, he himself could boast scarcely any territorial possessions. Without men or money, therefore, he could do little by himself in the face of the power of Hugh, who now acquired the duchy of Burgundy in addition to the duchy of France. Hugh became the real Regent of the kingdom when Louis was succeeded by his son, Lothair (954); for, as if to reward him for not aiming at the kingship, he now received the duchy of Aquitaine also. Lothair was chosen King, and anointed at Rheims, to the exclusion of his younger brother. Thus, the kingship having become elective, the ruinous Frankish custom of dividing the kingdom like a patrimony amongst the King's sons was happily discarded.

When Hugh died (956), he had by his sagacious self-restraint succeeded in making his house so strong that the kingship which he had had the wisdom to deny himself was ripe to fall into the mouths of his descendants. His son, Hugh Capet, took the final step in the foundation of the new dynasty, which his great ancestors had been so long preparing. The protracted struggle between the feudal nobles and the Carolingian Kings drew at length to an end. Without men, money, or lands, the energy and ability of the last of them were of no avail. The way to the throne was open to the House of Capet.*

* Capet, derived from *cappa*, and signifying the wearer of a little cape, was probably an old surname of the family. There is no evidence that the Capetians were descended from a Parisian butcher, as tradition, referred to by Dante, asserts. But that tradition at least enshrines a truth—that men of low origin founded feudal families of high rank by their valour and qualities as leaders in the troublous times of the ninth and tenth centuries.

Lothair made a desperate attempt to rid himself of the tutelage of Hugh on the one hand, and of the Emperor Otho II. of Germany on the other ; but in vain. His attempt to regain the duchy of Lorraine brought him into conflict with the Church, represented by Adalbero, Archbishop of Rheims, and Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., whom Adalbero had placed at the head of the famous School of Rheims. Lothair died in 986, and his son, Louis V., died in the following year, before he could humble the Archbishop, whom he had summoned to answer the charge of treason at Compiègne. When the Assembly met at that place there was none to sustain the charge. There was no Carolingian heir to the throne, unless it were Charles, Duke of Lorraine, uncle of the late King, who owed allegiance to the Emperor. The Church, led by Adalbero and the feudal nobility, and assembled at Senlis, elected Hugh Capet to the vacant throne. He was proclaimed King at Noyon, and anointed at Rheims, July 3, 987.

The election of Hugh Capet was not so much an expression of national feeling against the Germanic Carolingians, nor so much a triumph of French nationality, which was indeed, as yet scarcely born, as the triumph of the leading feudal house, under the wing of ecclesiasticism, over a royal authority claiming to be above and outside of feudalism. Capet was merely a feudal noble—*primus inter pares*—whose power as a King was therefore small. His election left the feudal principalities of Normandy, Champagne, Burgundy, Aquitaine, etc., as strong and independent as his own duchy of France.

Like the Merovingians, the Carolingians had allowed themselves to be stripped of their lands and their rights. They were fatally weakened by the lack of immediate domains. Their kingdom had been divided up into great seigniorial principalities, where their authority was only

felt through the channel of their feudal subordinates. Had they been great feudal nobles, they would have remained Kings. Society without a King was now more than ever inconceivable, since kingship was the necessary coping-stone to the feudal edifice. But a King without lands, when all wealth and authority had come to be connected with the land, was a thing impossible. The kingship passed therefore to that dynasty which had, with infinite patience, ability, and address, accumulated the greatest possessions in the necessary form of counties, duchies, and abbeys. And the fact that Paris was the centre of the new King's possessions meant that the power of France began to be consolidated round the capital, and thence to spread outwards and to promote the growth of the idea of a French nationality.

Once on the throne, Hugh succeeded in strengthening his position. He maintained the independence of France against the Empire and the Papacy, and, dying in 996, handed on the crown to his son, Robert the Pious. Neither he nor his successor, Henri I. (1031), made much progress in aggrandizing the kingship, but they secured the succession of their house by associating their sons with them in the kingship during their own lives.

Philippe I. made more progress in that direction. Ascending the throne in 1060 at the age of eight, and under the regency of Baldwin V., Count of Flanders, he reigned till 1108. It was one of the longest reigns in French history, and one of the least eventful. But with him begins the process to be continued in succeeding reigns, of drawing the scattered fragments of a dismembered country together, and uniting France into a national whole.

The monkish chroniclers have little that is good to say of Philippe. They represent him as sensual and avaricious. But we may suppose that their view of him was

tinged by prejudice, since in life and policy he was continually at loggerheads with the Church.

Whatever his shortcomings, Philippe had the political acumen to see very clearly that it was necessary to check the aggrandizement of the Dukes of Normandy. He foresaw that the conquest of England by William the Bastard would prove a disaster to France. The story is well known how, when William was trying to extend his sway over the county of Vexin, the French King sneered

at his greed and corpulence. "The King of England is with child; there will be many candles at his churching." "By the splendour of God," retorted William, "I will light a hundred thousand myself at the expense of Philippe"; and he set fire to Nantes. That was but an incident in the tale of Philippe's long struggle with William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and Henry Beauclerc. He aimed at separating Normandy from England by encouraging the Barons to revolt. The struggle did not always go in his favour.



NORMAN SOLDIER: FROM THE
BAYEUX TAPESTRY.

At one time Paris lay almost at the mercy of William Rufus. But Philippe steadily pursued the policy of accumulating treasure and lands, annexing fiefs like Vexin, Valois, Bourges, and Vermandois, and thus increasing the royal domains, without which kingship, as we have seen, in a feudal state was powerless to fulfil its functions.

That Philippe was not lacking in determination is proved by his resistance to the Papacy. He found himself involved in a quarrel with Gregory VII., whose

reforms, admirable in themselves, clashed with the temporal interests of Philippe as patron of many bishoprics and abbeys, and involved the domination of Rome over the French Church. Moreover, Philippe's irregular marriage with Bertrade de Montfort (wife of Falk, Count of Anjou) brought him into conflict with all the heavy artillery of the Church's excommunication, which he braved. His various motives are curiously suggestive of those which actuated Henry VIII. in his conflict with the Papacy.

The policy connected with the name of Gregory VII. and Urban II. is derived from a strong and earnest movement for reform which had arisen within the Church in the darkest days of the degradation of the Papacy. Whilst the bishopric of Rome was sinking almost to the level of any German benefice within the gift of the Emperor, the Monastery of Cluny, founded in 910 in Eastern France to reform monastic life, was nourishing the seeds of new ideals and ecclesiastical ambitions of incalculable consequence. The two great evils of the time, from the point of view of the Church, were the immorality of the clergy and simony, or the purchase of ecclesiastical preferment, which was largely responsible for it. The source of simony was traced to the domination of the lay Seigneurs, who, possessing ecclesiastical benefices, made open traffic in them, and allotted them to the highest bidder. To combat this evil, and so to achieve the reform of the clergy, the programme of Cluny shaped itself. It involved a withdrawal from the feudal system, a complete annulling of all lay influence over the clergy, and an absolute subordination of all local churches to a central head—the Pope—and therefore the entire independence of the Church from all control by the State.

It was reserved for the monk Hildebrand, brought up in the strictest ideas of Cluny, and elected Pope

(Gregory VII.) in 1073, to attempt to realize them and their logical corollaries.

It was over the theory of the Investiture that Church and State joined issue. The Kings and feudal Princes had everywhere arrogated to themselves the right not only of appointing to bishoprics and abbeys, but also of investing their nominees with their spiritual functions, and exacting homage from them in return. The reformers of the Church now claimed that the Investiture was essentially a sacrament which it was in the power of the Church alone to give. The reformers insisted, also, upon the celibacy of the clergy and upon the prohibition of simony. Logically these reforms involved a reconstruction of society and the relations of Church and State. If the feudal lord might no longer sell ecclesiastical benefices and appoint to Church dignities, the Church must be free of the State, and therefore, by virtue of its Divine origin and the function of consecrating the King, so far superior to the State. The right of giving the crown involved the right of taking it away, and of absolving the King's subjects from obedience to their royal master. The Pope must be raised above the Kings of the earth. "The radical theory of reform led directly to a theocracy."*

The struggle between Church and State lasted for over thirty years, and ended in a compromise agreeable to the views of those moderate men who, like Ivo of Chartres, held that the rights of the King must be reconciled with the liberty of the Church. The ground of reconciliation was to be found in a distinction between the property of the Church and her ecclesiastical heritage; between the feudal investiture of lands and jurisdiction, and the spiritual investiture which belonged to the Church by right of her religious authority. Philippe made formal

* Cf. A. Luchaire, *ap. Lavis*, II. ii. 210.

submission to the Pope at the Council of Paris (1103), and was granted absolution in the matter of Bertrade de Montfort. Four years later the King and his son Louis humbled themselves at the feet of the Pope, Pascal II., at Saint-Denis. The question of the Investiture was solved by the King tacitly dropping the spiritual investiture and ceasing to receive the feudal homage of the Bishops. He made no formal renunciation of his rights, and did not refrain from all profit in the matter of nominating prelates. The "French Canossa" was by no means a one-sided victory for the Papacy, but rather the beginning of a reconciliation between the Popes and the Capetians, of an alliance from the date of which the title of "Eldest Son of the Church" was to be the heritage of the wearers of the crown of France till the fall of the *ancien régime*.

Against the state of perpetual war, which was at once the business, the pleasure, and the bane of the feudal nobles, the Church had intervened (*circa* 1000) to secure the inviolability of the clergy and some alleviation for the defenceless. Pacts of peace, leagues into which prelates and Seigneurs entered, and bound themselves by oath not to play the brigand for a stated period, had been promoted.* These "peaces of God," contracts between individuals, developed into "truces of God," periods of cessation from the normal state of war, which, under the encouragement of the Popes and Capetian Kings, were extended throughout whole districts, and lengthened from mere week-ends or the observance of the Sabbath (1027) to the whole periods of the Christian fasts.

The Crusades against the infidel abroad were only rendered possible by such truces of God at home, by

* "From May till All Saints I will not seize horse or beast in the fields, burn houses or dig up vines under pretext of war," etc.

which protection was secured to the women, children, castles, and rights of Seigneurs warring abroad.

Further, through the institution of chivalry—an institution which goes back for the origin both of its forms and ideals to the early Germans, but which reached its height during the Crusades—the Church had begun to turn the warlike spirit and traditions of the feudal noble to the service of God and His clergy, the defence of the fatherless and widow. She now began to divert his predatory instincts from plundering his fellow-Christian to plundering the infidel Turk.

The first of the Holy Wars was mainly a French expedition. It was preached in France by the Pope and French orators. It was the direct outcome of the new force of Christianity in Europe. Urban II., having proved his power in the West by his struggle over the Investitures, thought himself strong enough to assert Christianity in the East. The direct object of the Crusades (1095-1291) was, indeed, to recover the tomb of Christ, and to hurl back the tide of Mussulman invasion which threatened the Latin world. The result, so far as France was concerned, was to weld that kingdom together into her modern form, and to make her predominant in Christendom.

Jerusalem, the Holy Sepulchre, and Antioch had fallen into the hands of the fanatical Turks (1078-1084). And now an intolerable persecution of Christian pilgrims to the most sacred of their shrines, combined with the Mussulman invasion of Spain (1087), induced Urban II. to preach a Holy War against the enemies of the Faith.

On November 28, 1095, at the Council of Clermont, the valorous Pope called upon the assembly of Bishops and Abbots and knights who were gathered together from the centre and south of France to take arms against the infidel. His trumpet-call awoke an extraordinary enthu-

siasm in his audience, who, in answer to his summons to "take up thy Cross and follow me," fixed on their shoulders a cross of cloth, and cried aloud, "Dieu le veut ! Dieu le veut !"

The idea thus promulgated by the enthusiasm and diplomacy of the Head of the Church roused the imagination of the people when it was preached to them by the fiery eloquence of men like Peter the Hermit, whose burning zeal, as he traversed France recounting the sufferings of the pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre, set the imaginations of nobles and peasants alike ablaze, and led them in thousands to the rendezvous at Cologne. Thence a wild, disorganized band of fanatics, the "popular Crusade," advanced, pillaging, massacring, dying, to disaster and annihilation in Asia Minor.

Meanwhile the organized army of the higher Barons assembled and set out in four divisions and by different routes—the first under Raymond IV., Count of Toulouse ; the second, mainly French of the north, under Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine, and his brother Baldwin ; a third, mainly Italian, under Bohemond of Tarentum, and Tancred, his nephew, half-German, half-Sicilian ; the fourth, wholly French, was led by Hugh, Count of Vermandois, brother of the King, Robert II., the Count of Flanders, and the Counts of Chartres and Blois. Kings were noticeable for their absence, for they were at this time in conflict with the Papacy over the Investitures.

The armies led by French heroes, whose deeds are written large in the page of the world's history, achieved its object. Jerusalem was taken (1099), and its capture was followed by the most atrocious slaughter of the Saracens, of all ages and sexes.

The motives which prompted the Crusaders to take part in their mission were many and complex. With Christian fervour and the spirit of chivalry mingled the love of

fighting and the love of loot ; to the hope of territorial aggrandizement and the prospect of opening up new markets were added the certain spiritual advantages offered by the Church in the shape of privileges and indulgences. The promise of salvation in the next world and a general amnesty in this, in return for the risks and hardships of foreign adventure, appealed to all those who shared in the general medieval belief that only by self-sacrifice and asceticism could a man atone for his sins. Though many were actuated by meaner motives, genuine religious fervour undoubtedly inspired the vast majority of these soldiers of Christ—at any rate in the earlier Crusades.

There is little to be said for the morality of proselytism at the point of the sword. But it may be observed that militant Christianity of this sort was an idea to which the practice of the Frankish Kings, from Clovis to Charlemagne, had accustomed the mind of Europe. Whatever their motives or morality, the effects of the Crusades were far-reaching and unforeseen. A social and industrial revolution gradually resulted, which in some respects is comparable to that of more modern times. Two main causes contributed to it. First, the absence of the Seigneur from his fief tended to loosen the bonds of feudalism. Serfs, artisans, merchants, burghers, began to group themselves into associations, and to exact by force or bargain in the country and in the towns some guarantees against the arbitrary exactions of their privileged overlords. In the absence of the Seigneur they felt their strength ; in his need for funds to support him upon his expeditions they found their opportunity. Secondly, in the case of the merchants and burghers of the towns—more especially in the South of France—their ability to seize the occasion was immensely enhanced by the wealth which the new trade with the East, opened

up by the Crusades, brought to them. Everywhere, to a greater or less degree, the *bourgeoisie* began to achieve their emancipation, by banding themselves together, and by exacting from their Seigneur either the concession of his rights or the definite limitation of the arbitrary exactions enforced by him or his agents. The abolition of arbitrary taxation, the personal liberty of the serf, the fixing and reducing of the market dues, the maintenance of peace and order, the right of administering justice—these, speaking generally, were the objects aimed at and largely secured by the new *bourgeoisie*, as their growing wealth and organization developed their power in the face of Seigneurs weakened, quarrelling, and impoverished, by the Crusades. The rise of the communes is the corollary of the Crusades. It was a step towards liberty equally distasteful to the Barons and the Bishops. It was a popular victory won at the expense of the feudal aristocracy.

The growth of commerce, then, stimulated by the Crusades, encouraged the growth and independence of the towns. The development of cities round about a castle or monastery was the natural outcome of the feudal system. Trades grew where they were fostered and protected. Equally logical, as the cities so founded or revived grew in wealth and population, was the effort made by them to follow the example set by their feudal lords themselves, to gain their freedom from their suzerain and to achieve a practical independence. Their efforts in this direction were crowned with varying success according to the various conditions prevailing in the different parts of France. But a general movement towards local independence and municipal self-government was fostered by the conditions of the twelfth century. It was stimulated, especially in the south, by the memory and continuance of Roman municipal institutions. At the same

time the prevalence of the feudal system pointed the way to a feudal form which might cloak a development really antagonistic to the spirit of feudalism.

The formation of a commune was, from this point of view, merely an act of subinfeudation—the recognition of a corporation as a feudal personage, whose obligations as a vassal were now to be no longer arbitrary and indefinite, but were specified in the contract of a fief between suzerain lord and vassal commune. In return for the homage paid and the vassal's oath sworn by the officers of the feudal city, the lord swore to observe his obligations. So far he reduced his own powers and opportunities, and so far the establishment of a commune implied a victory on the part of the merchants and citizens.

There were many towns which did not achieve the complete local self-government implied by the word "commune." But there were numerous *villes de bourgeoisie*, or chartered towns, which obtained by definite contracts more or less extensive rights of this character, combined with freedom from arbitrary exactions.

Whilst the growth of the communes was at once a cause and a result of the weakening of the feudal nobles, the Kings, who were endeavouring to establish their ascendancy over the latter, favoured the movement as opportunity occurred, and tended to take the communes under their special protection. But as the monarchy grew stronger, and the policy of centralization which it represented prevailed, the Crown, towards the end of the thirteenth century, began to grow jealous of their independence. Royal executive and judicial officers were introduced, and encroachments were made upon the autonomy of towns which then appeared, in their feudal light, as objectionable as the petty local Barons from whom they had won their freedom.*

* See Chapter VIII., *fin*.

And side by side with this movement towards social liberty there was manifested a tendency towards freedom of thought, which sprang in part from the stimulus given to the mind of the West by contact with the higher civilization of the East. It was a first step towards modern science and the revival of learning, and, when shown in the so-called "heresies" of the twelfth century, was vigorously denounced and suppressed by the Church. It is noticeable that, at a time when his great opponent, St. Bernard, was preaching the righteousness of slaying pagans, Abelard, the chief intellectual force of his age, who by the brilliancy of his lectures made the "School of Paris" the centre of education in Europe, dared to inculcate, to the students who crowded from every civilized country to sit at his feet, the humane precept, "Never use force to lead your neighbour into your belief; faith comes not by force, but through reason."

For it was the School of Philosophy at Paris which, in this twelfth-century Renaissance, attracted the newly-kindled enthusiasm of the studious. As early as 1109 William of Champeaux had opened a School of Logic at Paris, and it was due to the success of his brilliant and combative pupil, Peter Abelard, that a Society of Masters now arose, and constituted a University which traces its origin to the cathedral schools attached to the great churches of Paris. The multitude of disciples who flocked to the lectures of Abelard, and listened with delight to his bold theories and his assertion of the rights of reason against authority, showed that a new spirit of inquiry and speculation was abroad. The poets and orators of antiquity began to be studied with admiration; the introduction into Europe of some of the Arabian writings on physics and geometry was opening the door to the development of mathematical science. It was the light before a dawn that never broke into day. The flower

of intellectual and scientific inquiry was destined to be nipped in the bud by the blighting influence of Scholasticism. Roused to the danger of the new spirit of scepticism introduced by the sudden expansion of the field of education, the Church roused herself to fight. Paris became the first home of the Schoolmen. By their aid ecclesiasticism once more triumphed, and the reign of theology was resumed. Soon Scholasticism, with its ingenious and trifling disquisitions, absorbed the whole mental energy of the student world. Meantime, before Abelard had been silenced as a heretic by the Councils of Soissons and Sens (1140), and had given to the world the beautiful and pathetic story of his love for Héloïse, the martial poets of the north had sung the epic of Roland and of the pilgrimage of Charlemagne and his twelve peers. And in the south, in the gay land of Provence, where the language had already crystallized into a distinct speech, lyric poetry was born again in the castles of Languedoc and Aquitaine.* Here a greater share of independence and prosperity, and a closer acquaintance with the cultivated Saracens, had given rise to a development of social and intellectual refinement, which found expression in the new order of chivalry, of courtly life and amorous and satirical poetry.

William IX., Duke of Aquitaine, witty, flippant, tender by turns, but always polished, a Crusader who mocked at the Crusades, a lover who thanked God and St. Julian for his skill in gallantry, and a poet who could boast of the perfection of his art, ushers in for us the long line of troubadours, those professional songsters and lovers, who were drawn from every class without distinction, and who spent their days passing from one castle to another, hymning the praises of their chosen fair.

* The language of the south became known as *langue d'oc*, of the north as *langue d'oïl*, from the different forms for expressing the modern *oui*, "yes."

It is one of the curiosities of literature that the first examples of Provençal poetry preserved to us should be as complete, elaborate, and polished in form, as the last swan-song of the troubadours who were hushed to silence by the horrors of the Albigensian wars. And it is worth observing that the whole doctrine of this chivalrous love and courtly poetry which they sang—namely, that love between married people was impossible, and could only exist in perfect form between gracious lady and devoted knight, bound to serve his mistress in deed and art—was in itself an implied revolt against the subjection of woman, assigned in loveless marriage as part of a mere bargain or transaction in the vast network of the feudal system.

The songs of the troubadours, then, are, so far, the lyric monument of one aspect of a universal attempt to throw off the intellectual and social shackles of feudalism.

The moral and intellectual Renaissance of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which we have been describing, was expressed in architecture no less clearly than in literature and action. As if to give utterance to an era of greater intensity of faith and aspiration, springing from the Church's great effort at reform, architecture passed in style from the apogee of the Romanesque to the new creation of pointed arch and soaring nave and towering pinnacle, which is designated by the name of "Gothic." This period witnessed an outburst of church-building, from Arles to Chartres, from Cluny to Caen, in styles slightly varying according to the exact decade and locality of the edifice. About 1150 was accomplished the supreme achievement of French sculpture, the Royal Porch of Chartres, executed by sculptors influenced by the Byzantine art which the Crusades had brought closer home, and fulfilling the reasoned object of medieval masons, which

was to illustrate to the gazing, illiterate crowd without what the Book of God preached by word and painted window within.

The great Gothic cathedrals were not the work of one man, but of a nation in love with building, inspired by the wonder and beauty of glass and stone strung together into one perfect organism. They are the manifestations of a whole people's spiritual and artistic ideal, stirred by a noble impulse and supremely realized. It is not by accident that they achieved their perfection in this age.



P II.

ON THE WALLS OF CARCASSONNE.

In the masonry of this remarkable old city of Southern France the history of the country is visualized in a remarkable fashion. The lowest of the three clearly marked periods is Roman (fourth century), above is the work of the Visigoths, and the highest is medieval (eleventh and twelfth centuries).

VII

LOUIS VI. (THE FAT) AND PHILIPPE AUGUSTE—THE ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE A.D. 1108—1226

Owing to Philippe's quarrel with the Papacy, Louis VI., his son by his first wife Bertha, though associated with him in the crown, was not consecrated by the Church ; but his vigorous and successful resistance to the attacks of the Anglo-Normans in Vexin, and to brigandage in general, had already proved him fit to reign (1108).

By his constant duels with petty feudalism, his protection of the poor, the weak, and the clergy, Louis VI., le Gros (the Fat), secured the grateful memory of his people, and laid the foundations of a popular monarchy, based upon benevolent justice and the good-will of the masses. Personally he was a simple, generous, brave, good-natured soul, with no scorn for the good things of the flesh. He did not marry till middle age, and then Adelaide of Savoy bore him six sons and three daughters.

To raise the monarchy above feudalism it was necessary that the monarch should be the strongest of the feudal nobles. Men and money were needed for this purpose, and for the performance of that duty of police which is the first function of government. Louis pursued his father's policy of increasing the Sovereign's domain, which alone could provide him with these necessities. By every device he worked towards the

end of making himself the greatest proprietor in the Île de France. That domain was hedged in by the castles of robber-knights, which, as we have seen, had sprung up in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Against these feudal wolves Louis waged incessant warfare with his own hand. He was a soldier who loved fighting of this sort for its own sake, and, in spite of his rank and obesity, persisted in engaging desperately in combat. He did not go on the Crusade, but more wisely stayed at home, and took advantage of the absence of the nobles to extend his own sway.

Notwithstanding his valiant, and often rash, endeavours, the force of Louis was not equal to his will. His attempts to reduce the high Barons and the great feudatories, like the Count of Flanders, failed; and in Normandy he was opposed by a soldier as valiant as himself and a statesman immeasurably superior, Henry Beauclerc, King of England. With him Louis waged an unprofitable and inglorious war.

Louis VII. (the Young), King of France and Duke of Aquitaine through his wife Eleanor, was sixteen years of age when he came to the throne (1137). Devout and docile in the hands of the clergy, and of his prudent Minister, the monk Suger, Louis was influenced still more by his passionate devotion to his wife. To her, daughter of William, Count of Poitiers, heiress of all the lands between the Loire and the Adour, vain, fickle, and sensual, accomplished in all the arts of love and poetry as they were practised in the Courts of the South, he owed almost all the misfortunes of his reign.

Louis the Young opened his reign with some spirit. He began by asserting the Queen's right to the county of Toulouse, and laid siege to that town. He maintained his right of presentation to the See of Bourges, although by so doing he was brought into conflict with the Pope.

He punished several refractory nobles, and led his army against Thibaut IV., Count of Champagne. In the course of that campaign he took the Castle of Vitry by storm, and set fire to it. Unhappily, the flames spread to the church, and 1,300 of the inhabitants who had sought refuge there were burnt to death. There is no doubt that Louis was greatly affected by the sight of their charred bodies, and remorse occasioned by this disaster led him into another and a greater. Edessa had fallen into the hands of the Turks. The fiery eloquence of St. Bernard roused his listeners to the pitch of enthusiasm.* The scenes of Clermont were repeated at Vézelay (1146). Louis took the Cross, and led the second Crusade to the defence of Jerusalem; but though this expedition was more elaborately organized, and had more of a military and less of a popular and religious character than the former, it ended in the most miserable failure. The piety of the King, who was chiefly concerned, not to fight, but to pray at the Holy Sepulchre, the lack of discipline amongst his followers, and the horde of women who followed the army, contributed to render the Crusade a fiasco. Louis returned with the remnant of his army in 1149, disappointed and discredited. The frivolity and vexatious behaviour of his wife, which had contributed to the failure of the campaign, was rendered doubly intolerable now that her contempt was expressed for a King who was, she said, fit only to be a monk.

* The second Crusade was largely the work of St. Bernard, the eloquent ascetic, Abbot of Clairvaux, who by sheer force of character dominated Western Christianity throughout the second quarter of the twelfth century. He impressed upon his age the ideal of monastic asceticism which was embodied in the Cistercian Order which he founded—an Order of monks vowed to poverty, obedience, and chastity, virtues long since forgotten by the monks of Cluny, and too soon to be forgotten by the followers of St. Bernard himself. He also helped to found the great Order of the Templars.

He divorced her, and a few weeks later she married Henry Plantagenet, heir to the English crown (1152), Count of Anjou and Duke of Normandy. With her the rich duchy of Aquitaine passed to the English King, who, presently acquiring Brittany by the marriage of his son, became master of almost the whole of Western France. Louis' divorce, if morally correct, was politically fatuous. His failure in the East damaged his influence and that of St. Bernard, who had prophesied his success ; but it only served to brighten the lustre of his prudent Minister, the Abbot Suger, who had never ceased to urge his master not to leave his flock to the mercy of the wolves. In his absence Louis had appointed the trusted Minister of Louis the Fat to act as Regent. His sage and brilliant administration of justice and finance won him the title of the "Solomon of the century." Upon his return, Suger handed over to his royal master a country which his skilful and unselfish statesmanship had rendered peaceful and prosperous. Himself the most authoritative historian of this epoch, he is perhaps the only writer of her history who influenced the destinies of France.

For the remaining twenty years of his reign Louis was occupied with the feud in which Eleanor's divorce had involved him. Jealousy, naturally springing from those personal and political causes, led him into a constant struggle with the increasing power of his rival, Henry II. of England. The French King proved himself more dangerous in intrigue than in arms. He encouraged the rebellion of Henry's sons, and seized the occasion of the murder of Thomas à Becket to enlist the influence of the Church against the English King.

It was at the tomb of Becket that the devout French King caught the chill from which he died in 1180. He had made a pilgrimage to pray for the recovery of the

longed-for heir whom Adèle of Champagne had born to him.

Philippe II., surnamed Augustus from the month of his birth, and Dieudonné by his grateful parents, was but fifteen when he began to reign. His reign marks an important epoch. It is not without reason that he has been termed the real founder of the absolute monarchy in France. Not only did the new King reduce to subjection those Barons who still attempted to rule independently of him, but he also succeeded in winning back from the English nearly all their possessions in France.

Fortunately, Philippe was extraordinarily able and precocious. His first step was to persecute the Jews, and fill his treasury with their ransoms; the next, to acquire Artois by his marriage with Elizabeth, daughter of the Count of Hainault, and niece of the Count of Flanders. The marriage gave offence to the House of Champagne, which had been disputing with the House of Flanders the perquisite of influencing the King; and since the Archbishop of Rheims was William of Champagne, the royal pair dispensed with the traditional coronation, and were crowned quietly at St. Denis. Thus the domains of France were extended as far as Flanders. The young King next turned to crush the great Barons who endeavoured to rule independently of him. He quelled the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Châlons, and added to his domains the counties of Amiens, Valois, Vermandois. He had been aided in his efforts to subdue the Barons by Henry II. of England; but the ambition of Philippe left no place for gratitude. He had abandoned his father's policy of encouraging the Jews; he pursued it in the direction of instigating Henry's rebellious sons.

Jealousy of the English, which he inherited naturally from his father, had sunk deep into his heart as a boy,

when, beneath the huge elm-tree at Gisors, on the boundary of their territories of France and Normandy, he had witnessed the conferences between Louis and Henry. And more than once the high-spirited Prince had given expression to his indignation at the power of the English King. Such was his intimacy with Richard Cœur de Lion, Duke of Aquitaine, and heir to the English crown, that for a long time the Princes shared the same tent and bed. But that intimacy could not withstand the strain to which the brilliant courage of the Lion Heart, and the natural rivalry between England and France, was soon to put the proud and jealous nature of Philippe.

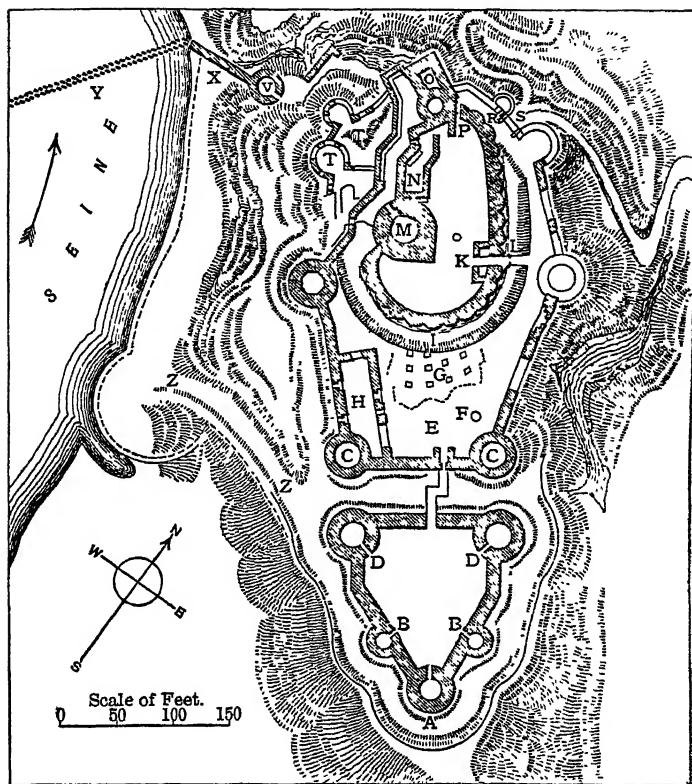
Their rivalry was brought to a head in the course of the third Crusade. Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of Saladin. Another Crusade had long been contemplated. At a meeting of his Barons at Gisors, Cœur de Lion and Philippe took the Cross, and under their leadership and that of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa an expedition sailed for the Holy Land in 1190. Acre was taken in the following year; but by that time the fame of Richard's impetuous daring had grown intolerable to the French King. The heritage of the Count of Flanders, who had fallen before Acre, tempted him. Having first sworn to respect the rights and lands of the English King, he returned to France with intent to seize them. The Pope refused to release him from that oath, but the news of Richard's captivity in Austria encouraged him to ignore it. Entering into an alliance with Richard's brother, John Lackland, who undertook to do homage to the French King, he proceeded to attack Normandy.

"Have a care for yourself," wrote Philippe to John, when he heard the unwelcome news of Richard's release from an imprisonment which they had endeavoured to bribe the Emperor to prolong, "Have a care—the devil

is unloosed." And Richard, returning, crossed over into Normandy, and waged war with ceaseless energy against his treacherous foe (1194-1199). John, in terror, betrayed his ally, and, after massacring 300 French soldiers, handed over Evreux to his brother. Richard inflicted a humiliating defeat upon Philippe at Fréteval, and again at Courcelles. In diplomacy as well as in wealth and military skill he proved himself superior to his rival. To protect Rouen, and to render a French invasion of Normandy impossible, he built upon an isolated promontory in an elbow of the Seine a castle, which he dubbed the Château-Gaillard. Its deep moat, hewn in the rock, its triple enceinte and walls 5 feet thick, seemed to render it an impregnable barrier to French aggression for ever. The Château-Gaillard marks an epoch in military architecture ; for it was built on the reasoned principles of defence, which had been elaborated in the castles of Syria, whence Richard Cœur de Lion borrowed them. Just before death cut short the career of this brilliant French-English King, he concluded a truce with Philippe, at the instigation of Pope Innocent III. By its terms Philippe was forced to yield up the fruits of all his ten years of war.

But the death of Richard (1199) left an adversary in the field whose vile and pusillanimous character enabled Philippe to win back all and more than he had lost.

England and Normandy recognized John Lackland as King ; but Philippe supported the claims of Arthur of Brittany against those of his old ally, intending that he should play against John the same part as John had played against Richard. Philippe, however, was presently obliged to abandon that cause and patch up a temporary peace with King John at Goulet (1200), owing to the crisis brought about by the interdict which the Pope laid upon his kingdom.



GROUND-PLAN OF THE CHÂTEAU-GAILLARD

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. High Angle Tower. | N. The Escarpment. |
| BB. Smaller Side Towers. | O. Postern Tower. |
| CC, DD. Corner Towers. | P. Postern Gate. |
| E. Outer Enceinte, or Lower Court. | RR. Parapet Walls. |
| F. The Well. | S. Gate from the Escarpment. |
| G, H. Buildings in the Lower Court. | TT. Flanking Towers. |
| I. The Moat. | V. Outer Tower. |
| K. Entrance Gate. | X. Connecting Wall. |
| L. The Counterscarp. | Y. The Stockade in the River. |
| M. The Keep. | ZZ. The Great Ditches. |

For, on the death of Isabel of Hainault, Philippe had married Ingelburgha, a Princess of Denmark, wishing to cement an alliance with that maritime nation with a

view to his project of invading England (1193). The day after his marriage he took a violent dislike to her, and presently obtained from a council of his clergy at Compiègne a decree of divorce on the usual plea of consanguinity. Ingelburgha protested; she was beautiful, and she was good. Her brother, King Knut VI., invoked the aid of the genealogists, and appealed to the Pope. The Pope declared the decree of divorce void and null. Philippe was furious, and, to clinch the matter, married Agnes of Méran. Innocent III. placed his kingdom under an interdict. So great was the King's influence over his clergy that in many parts the royal Bishops refused to publish the sentence; but the rest of the land groaned under a decree which deprived them of all the consolations and sacraments of the Church. After nine months the King yielded momentarily. Agnes, it is said, died of a broken heart. But for twenty years Philippe refused to live with Ingelburgha, and clamoured for a divorce, defying the Pope more or less openly, according as the state of his military affairs permitted. In the end he was reconciled to his wife (1213). Still, the length and strength of his opposition to the Pope is proof of the immense development of the royal power of France under his reign.

Meanwhile a fourth Crusade, preached by Foulques, priest of Neuilly-sur-Marne, upon the suggestion of Innocent III., and undertaken in conjunction with the Venetians, had ended in the taking of Constantinople and the establishment of a Frankish Empire in the East. Baldwin IV., Count of Flanders, was elected to the vain honour of Emperor (1202-1204), and Geoffroi de Villehardouin, almost the first French prose writer worthy of the name, who wrote the history of this episode, was rewarded for his share in it by the title of King of Macedon. Philippe, whose hands were full

enough, was hampered in his wars by the absence of his Barons on this Crusade, but he himself wisely refused to be drawn into the vortex.

No sooner was he temporarily reconciled with the Pope than he turned again to his struggle with King John (1202). A pretext was easily found for renewing the quarrel. John had deprived one of his most influential vassals, the Comte de la Marche, of his promised bride, and taken her for himself. The Comte and other nobles of Poitou appealed to Philippe as John's suzerain. John was summoned to Paris to be tried by the feudal court, and, not appearing, was declared to have forfeited all the lands he held as vassal of the King of France.*

The arms of Philippe made good the pious aspirations of the feudal court. The fall of the Château-Gaillard, which had seemed so impregnable, and of Rouen (1204), heralded the conquest of Normandy. Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poitou, were also lost to the English Crown. But, meantime, John, in alliance with William of Les Roches, had defeated Arthur of Brittany at Mirabeau (July 30, 1202), and taken him prisoner. John held his nephew and rival tight in his clutches for a year or more, first in the dungeons of Falaise, then of Rouen. Then Arthur, in the phrase of Matthew Paris, disappeared. There is no reason to doubt the popular rumour of the time, that John was responsible for his death; but so little did that crime benefit him that by 1206 Brittany was in the hands of Philippe. For the first time since the establishment of the dynasty a French King held sway among the Bretons to the coast of the Atlantic. By the side of Richard, Philippe had appeared mean and treacherous; by the side of John, the meanest and

* M. Bémont, *Revue Historique*, 1886, has shown that, as the murder of Arthur of Brittany did not take place till a year later, that was not the occasion of this trial, as is usually said, nor was John condemned to death.

most vainly vicious of men, Philippe, the intriguer, stands forth as conqueror and hero.

John had hardly raised a hand to defend his possessions in France. Thanks to his inertia England ceased to be an appanage of the Continent. If the English King had been the greatest potentate in France, the very extent and diversity of his dominions made him weak. He held his several realms on different conditions and by various titles. He could not concentrate the power of provinces, divided in interests as in language, in customs, and by the sea, upon the one task of overwhelming his brother of Paris. Philippe, indeed, such was his insatiable ambition and energy, endeavoured to turn the tables upon the Plantagenets, and to annex their realm of England. It was long before the idea was accepted on either side of the Channel that the destinies of the two countries must pursue distinct and divergent lines.

The idea of invading England, which had tempted Philippe at the beginning of his struggle with Richard, returned with double force as John's weakness and unpopularity increased. He assembled a fleet and army at Boulogne (May, 1213). The Pope had placed John under the ban of Europe, and the expedition took on something of the nature of a Crusade. Philippe's son, Louis, who through his wife, Blanche of Castile, could advance some claims to the English throne, was indicated as John's successor; but John submitted to the Pope, and the Pope saved his vassal from a French conquest. For a moment it seemed that the tables would be turned once more against Philippe. He marched his armies against Flanders to hide his chagrin, and to extend the French monarchy in that direction by humbling the Count who had rebelled against him; but the Emperor, Otto of Brunswick, who, with all the Princes of the Netherlands, had entered into an alliance with John against the

French King, came to the relief of the Flemings. The English held the sea. John, landing at Rochelle, began a successful campaign on the French flank in Poitou ; but the people of France rallied round their King, as for a national cause. Philippe confronted the allied armies at Bouvines. So confident were the Flemings of triumphing over their hated enemies that they had already arranged the partition of France. The French force was inferior in numbers, and the Barons shrank from joining battle. But as their rearguard was crossing the bridge at Bouvines in order to continue their advance upon Lille, the enemy attacked them. It was August (1214), and the heat was intense. Philippe, overcome by the heat and fatigue, had laid aside his armour, and was eating some bread and wine beneath the shade of a tree ; but at the news of the action he mounted his horse and dashed into battle, as gladly, it was said, as if it had been to a wedding. The Emperor, who had hoped to catch the French army in retreat, found himself faced by a determined army which had outmanœuvred him. A desperate battle ensued, in which the King fought as a hero. At one moment he was unhorsed, and the foe vainly endeavoured to pierce his armour as he lay on the ground. Galon de Montigny, who bore the oriflamme of St. Denis, waved the banner of scarlet silk for help, and succour came only just in time. But it was not only the King and his Barons who proved their bravery ; Bishops, peasants, and burghers, and the militia of the communes fought with equal courage and determination for their King and country. In the event the French gained a brilliant and crushing victory. Philippe's return to Paris was a triumphal procession. An extraordinary demonstration of popular enthusiasm greeted him on the way and in the streets of Paris. It bore witness to the immense progress which Philippe had made in establish-

ing the Capetian monarchy in the hearts of the people, and in evoking thereby the sentiment of national unity.

Philippe was not merely a conqueror. His policy of encouraging the communes, of endeavouring to limit the power of the clergy to spiritual affairs, and his protection of the merchants and *bourgeoisie*, all entitle him to the praise of an enlightened and original ruler. The communes and the free towns repaid their benefactor by financial and military support. The charters of the communes granted by the King fixed a royal revenue to be paid in return for rights abandoned by him. The towns themselves stood as fortresses against his enemies, and their militia proved their gratitude on the field of Bouvines and on the confines of his kingdom.

Not less important than his conquests were the changes introduced by Philippe in the government of the country. They were changes which tended to substitute, for feudal irresponsibility and diffusion, the concentration of authority in the King's hands, and to bring the country into real subjection to the Crown and the law. As the head and centre of the State, the King had been accustomed to take counsel with members of his royal household, whose offices had gradually become hereditary. Under Philippe these councillors ceased to hold their offices by hereditary right, and were appointed by the King. His Court, the *Curia Regis*, indeed, took on something of the character of a modern court of law, and in connection with this court or council an official class gradually came into being. To connect the local with the central organization, Philippe introduced a system analogous to that of the *Missi* of Charlemagne. Royal officials were created to superintend the actions of the *prévôts*, as the representatives of the monarchy in the royal domain were called, who had been established soon after the accession of Hugh Capet. The new

officials were called *baillis* in the north, *seneschals* in the south ; but in the south the *seneschals* were drawn, not, like the *baillis*, from the rising official class, but, for the most part, from the local magnates. Their function was, briefly, to hold assizes, and to report to Paris upon the administration of the *prévôts*. Thus control over local administration was secured.

Philippe left his mark upon Paris as well as upon France. The great castle of the Louvre, with its huge round tower, and the wall and towers with which he surrounded his capital, have indeed disappeared, but the cathedral of Notre Dame dates from his reign (1162).

Philippe Auguste, with his many-sided activity, did not fail to concern himself in the affairs of the Empire, which, indeed, as master of the kingdom of Arles, closely affected him. He made the power of the French monarchy felt in the choice of the Emperor, and inaugurated the policy which was to become traditional, of encouraging the divisions of Germany in order to prevent it from becoming a strong united Power.

After the Battle of Bouvines, Philippe devoted himself to administering and consolidating his kingdom. He left it to his son to carry out his darling project of subduing England, and but for the timely death of John it seems probable that Louis VIII. would have been crowned at Westminster (1216).

Such and so great had been the success of Philippe Auguste north of the Loire. The stars in their courses fought for France. Events so shaped themselves that, almost without any effort on his part, the authority of the French monarchy was to be extended to the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees. And yet the Provençals of the southern counties, who looked to the King of Aragon as their suzerain, had, to begin with, more in common with the Spaniards than the French.

The county of Toulouse was the one remaining great feudal State which had hitherto preserved its real independence of the French Crown.

We have seen that the South of France, under the fostering influence of greater peace and commercial prosperity, had developed a language, literature, and civilization of its own, far in advance of those of the rough warriors north of the Loire. It now seemed as if community of religion was about to disappear, and that the last link that bound the North and South of France together would be severed. In 1170 a rich merchant of Lyons, Pierre Valdo, had inaugurated a reformed religion, which discarded most of the peculiar tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, and concerned itself mainly with teaching and preaching the Gospel. This religion of the Vaudois rapidly spread down the Valley of the Rhone. A few years previously the people of Languedoc and Gascony had begun to adopt views equally at variance with those of Rome. Our knowledge of what they believed is only derived from the evidence of their persecutors. So effective was to be the persecution of the Albigensians (they took their name from their chief centre, the little town of Albi, near Toulouse), that no independent evidence remains; but it appears that they had largely adopted the belief of the Manichæans, who held that there were two Gods—a God of good and a God of evil. It is certain that they bitterly opposed the authority of the Church. This, combined with a tendency to political independence, was their real sin.

In 1177, Raymond V., Count of Toulouse, sent a formal complaint to the Chapter-General of Cîteaux, calling attention to the alarming spread of this heresy. The churches, he declared, were empty, and the priests themselves had succumbed to the contagion. There was



Newman Fiddis

THE WALLED CITY OF AIGUES MORTES, NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE RHONE. *Pages 107 and 113*

It was founded by Louis IX. in the thirteenth century, and fortified by Philippe-le-Haut, his successor. From Aigues Mortes Louis IX. sailed for the Holy Land in 1248.

some suggestion, in the following year, of a joint Crusade against the Albigensians being undertaken by the Kings of France and England. A mild form of persecution was begun in that year ; but the heresies spread amongst high and low. Raymond VI., when he succeeded to the county of Toulouse in 1194, protected the heretics whom his father had persecuted. Pope Innocent III., who had first endeavoured to check this menace to his Church by the persuasive eloquence of his emissaries, turned at length to more violent methods. He pressed the King of France to lead a Crusade against the heretics (1204-1207) ; but Philippe's hands were full with the business of acquiring the possessions of King John. Meantime, Folquet, Bishop of Marseilles ; a Spanish priest, Dominic of Guzman ; and the Pope's Legates, did their utmost to combat the heresies. The murder of one of the latter, Pierre de Castelnau, by a member of the household of the Count of Toulouse (1208), provoked the crisis. A Crusade was preached. The people of the north were offered the same spiritual advantages as those which had tempted them to the Holy Land, and a prospect of greater and more accessible material plunder. In 1209, 50,000 men assembled at Lyons and marched down the Rhone Valley. In the absence of the King of France, they were commanded by the Papal Legate, Arnaud Amalric.

The horrible excesses to which the Crusaders gave way after the capture of Jerusalem or Constantinople were but symptoms of a savage and bloodthirsty bigotry, which was as ready to spill the blood of a heretic as of an infidel. Even so good a man as St. Louis was wont to say that no theologian ought to dispute with heretics ; the proper argument was a sword through the body of the unbeliever. It was in such a spirit that the armies of the north now marched to subdue the south and exterminate the Albigensian heresy.

There is no limit to the atrocities which men under the influence of religious fanaticism will commit ; yet, knowing this, it is still hard to realize that in Languedoc whole populations of Christians—men, women, and children—were murdered and massacred by Christians, who warred with them at the instigation of St. Dominic and the bidding of the Pope, because they chose to differ from the doctrines of the orthodox Church.

In July the Crusading army appeared before Béziers. Raymond of Toulouse had already made his submission, and been whipped at the shrine of St. Gilles. Raymond Roger, Viscount of Béziers and Carcassonne, had likewise made his submission ; but the Legate, fearing to be balked of all his prey, refused to listen to him, and commenced the siege of Béziers. The town soon fell. A horrible massacre ensued. Thousands of men, women, and children, who had sought refuge in the Church of the Madeleine, were butchered. "How shall we distinguish the innocent from the guilty ?" asked the more scrupulous of the Crusaders. "Slay them all," returned the bloodthirsty Legate. "God will know His own."

The young Viscount, Raymond Roger, threw himself into Carcassonne, and bravely defended that mighty stronghold. At length he was forced to make terms. The Legate offered him a safe-conduct. Roger came with 300 of his followers to his tent. "Faith," said the Legate, "is not to be kept with those who have no faith." The Viscount and his friends were seized. Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, a ferocious bigot, who had distinguished himself in the siege by his zeal and valour, was rewarded with the lordships of Carcassonne and Béziers. The Viscount was delivered into his charge, thrown into prison, and disappeared. Everywhere victory crowned the efforts of the Crusaders. Nothing could withstand the energy and resource of Simon.

Everywhere butchery of the heretics, at scaffold, stake, or point of sword, marked the path of the conquerors.

The war became more and more an invasion of the south by the north. To save the Count of Toulouse and the independence of Languedoc, and to check the aggrandizement of Simon de Montfort, the King of Aragon intervened. He was defeated and slain at the Battle of Muret (1213). Simon relentlessly completed the conquest of Languedoc. The domains of the Count of Toulouse passed to him, and he justified his acquisition by introducing a régime which was superior to the feudal anarchy, which the Counts of Toulouse had never succeeded in suppressing. In all things, however, he acted as the lieutenant of the King of France. An attempt on the part of Raymond to recover his domains in the Valley of the Rhone, supported by a last effort of the south to recover its independence, interrupted his success. Toulouse revolted, and Simon, pressing the siege, was killed by a stone hurled from the walls (1217-18). His son, Amaury de Montfort, unable to maintain his position, ceded his claims to Louis VIII. A new Crusade was proclaimed. The King marched at the head of a large army towards Languedoc. Avignon alone offered a serious resistance. Thus, during his brief reign (1223-1226), Louis VIII. achieved the subjugation of the whole of Provence and Languedoc, with the exception of Toulouse and Guienne. His chief distinction, however, is that he was the son and the father of two great monarchs. Though he was given the nickname of "the Lion," it was his wife, Blanche of Castile, beautiful, vigorous, virtuous, and determined, who displayed rather the qualities of a lion-heart. For ten years she held the reins of government firmly, whilst she trained her son, Louis IX., to a high ideal of kingship (1226-1236). His life is the noblest monument of his mother's worth.

Before the majority of Louis was proclaimed (1236), the important treaty of Meaux, signed in 1229 by Raymond VII. and the Queen Regent, secured to one of his brothers the domains of the Count of Toulouse ; whilst the marriage of another brother, Charles of Anjou, with the heiress of Provence prepared the way for the future union of that fair land with France. Already the King's seneschals were established at Beaucaire and Carcassonne, and the French King was practically master of Southern France ; but, lest the Albigensian heresy should ever again rear its head, there was established in Toulouse an ecclesiastical court to inquire into the case of those suspected of holding heretical opinions, a court which was to prove the most terrible engine of ecclesiastical tyranny ever devised by the wit of man. It was known as the Inquisition, and was composed of Dominicans, a new order of friars, which had been created by the Pope at the instigation of St. Dominic for the extermination of heresy.

The procedure of the Inquisition exercised far-reaching influence upon the general prosperity of France. The property of all condemned was confiscated to the Crown, or shared between the Crown and the Church ; and the influence of the arbitrary secret course pursued by this high tribunal of ecclesiastical justice affected the procedure of criminal law in France, laying the foundations of the atrocious jurisprudence of the *ancien régime*.* It turned the scale in the choice between public prosecutions with oral evidence, such as were developed in England from the ancient law, and secret, official prosecutions.

These terrible wars utterly wiped out the characteristic civilization of the South. The troubadours were silenced or fled to Spain, and the Courts of Love ceased

* Langlois, ap. Lavissee, III. ii. 74.

to hold their sway. Northern methods of government were introduced. Feudalism on the one hand, and the independence of the towns on the other, were checked. All danger of a great separate State south of the Loire was dissipated. Yet, though conquered, the South was never wholly reconciled or absorbed. In the Revolution it led the opposition to the Crown ; and to-day, though politically at one with the rest of France, it remains a land apart, with a different language and peculiar customs and national ideas, as the revival of the *Félibres* has proved.

VIII

ST. LOUIS (1226—1270) AND PHILIPPE LE HARDI (1270—1285)

ST. LOUIS has been well described as “the true hero of the Middle Ages, a Prince, pious as he was brave, who venerated the Church, yet knew how to resist its head ; who respected Law, yet placed Justice above it ; a frank and gentle soul, and a loving heart filled with Christian charity, yet one who could condemn to torture the body of the sinner for the salvation of his soul ; who on earth looked only towards heaven, and made of his kingly office a magistracy of order and equity. Rome has canonized him, and the people still see him seated under the oak of Vincennes, dispensing justice to all comers. This saint, this man of peace, did more in the simplicity of his heart for the advancement of royalty than the most subtle counsellors or ten fighting monarchs, because the King in after-time appeared to the people as the incarnation of Justice.”

So delicate, indeed, was his conscience that it frequently embarrassed his advisers. He even felt scruples as to the justice of his father's conquests.

His policy and his character alike were moulded by his mother, Blanche of Castile. It was owing to her skilful training that, when Louis reached his majority, he had already given ample proof of those gentle, kingly qualities, that scrupulous wisdom and upright judgment,

which were presently to make him the mediator of Europe. It was owing to her statesmanship that he acceded to a kingdom not torn to pieces, but consolidated, and a throne strengthened, instead of one undermined by the disintegrating forces of feudalism.

For with masterly determination and consummate address, tempering the fierce blood of the Plantagenets, which ran in her veins, with their prudent skill in affairs, and adding to their ruthless energy the power of a woman's charm, Blanche had faced and defeated the opposition of the magnates of France. Their growing jealousy at the exaltation of the power of the Crown, necessarily achieved at their expense, came to a head when, in the prospect of a long minority, they thought they saw their opportunity under the government of a Regent whom they hated as a foreigner and foolishly despised as a woman.

Blanche had first to crush the rebellion of the Counts of Champagne, Brittany, and La Marche. They had entered into alliance with Henry III. of England (1227), who was eager to recover some portion at least of his lost dominions. On the failure of that rebellion a truce had been patched up. The diplomacy of Blanche now drew Theobald, Count of Champagne, to her side; but Philip, Count of Burgundy, joined Peter of Brittany, and, relying upon the support of Henry, they rose again and again, only to be cheated of their hopes. At last, after many disappointments, Henry landed at St. Malo (1230). But in the face of Blanche and the young King, and the growing strength of the royal party, he achieved nothing, except the expenditure of a huge sum of money and the ruin of his army through sickness and debauchery. A truce for three years was made in 1231. When it expired, the English King sent 2,000 Welshmen to aid the Count of Brittany; but his help ended there, and the King of

France entering the field with an overwhelming force, the Count was reduced to subjection.

By an arrangement with the Count of Champagne, the King presently acquired the suzerainty over the counties of Blois, Chartres, and Sancerre, and the viscounty of Châteaudun.

In 1242 Louis had once more to face a coalition of rebellious magnates in the south-west, notably the Count of Toulouse and Hugh, Count of La Marche, who allied themselves with the King of England. He raised a general levy of the kingdom, and at Taillebourg, on the banks of the Charente, and among the vineyards and narrow lanes of Saintes, overwhelmed his allied enemies, who were united only in the selfishness of their desires. Poitou submitted, then the Count of Toulouse, and Henry, deserted by his allies, was compelled to make a truce for five years (1243). The King's triumph over these rebellious Barons was the crowning act in the struggle of three reigns. From this time the great feudatories recognized their master in the King of France. Firmly established in his own domain, Louis had humbled Brittany, and practically annexed Toulouse and Champagne. The House of Plantagenet had been repulsed in its endeavour to regain a footing in France, and ranked now as a foreign Power, whose support of the Counts brought with it the odium of a foreign invasion. Louis, indeed, allowed the King of England to retain the duchy of Guienne and Gascony,* but only on condition of homage to the Crown. And, as a further step towards weakening his influence,

* By the Treaty of Abbeville, which was not signed till 1259. About the same time Louis came to an agreement with the King of Aragon, renouncing his shadowy claims to Barcelona and other parts of Catalonia, which had fallen within the Spanish March of Charlemagne, whilst Aragon renounced the pretensions of his house to the lordship over Béziers, Carcassonne, and most of the county of Toulouse.

Louis enacted in Parliament at Paris that the lords who held fiefs from the Kings of France and England must resign one or the other.

In her struggle with the nobles Blanche had been largely aided by the Church. The great prelates saw that by the failure of the authority of the Crown they would be left at the mercy of the Barons. Yet Blanche, devout as she might be, was quick to resent any attempt of the Church to encroach upon her temporal authority. When the Archbishops of Rouen and Beauvais refused to answer a summons to appear before the King, claiming to be exempt from feudal law, and to acknowledge no judge but Pope and God, she would not yield an inch, and her firmness triumphed. Throughout this reign, in fact, the Crown insisted that the clergy must be subject in civil matters to the civil courts.

Similarly, in 1245, when the exactions of the Pope, who required money to carry on his quarrel with the Emperor, had provoked the bitterest discontent in France, Louis sided with the just protests of his people. Assembled in council with his Barons, Louis despatched a remonstrance to the Pope, protesting that it was unheard of that the Roman See should levy for all its needs upon the temporalities of the French Church. The protest fell on deaf ears. The Pope insisted on his levies. The clergy, hard pressed, recouped themselves at the expense of their suzerains and vassals by pressing every ecclesiastical claim and privilege to the utmost. In 1246 the French Barons met together and entered into a covenant of resistance, and issued a manifesto dwelling upon the intolerable avarice and arrogance of the Church. The Pope fulminated against the league. But his cause was too unpopular in France. A deputation from the French clergy, accompanied by a royal envoy, waited upon Innocent IV. (1247), and formulated their grievances

against the Apostolic See. They complained of the usurpation of jurisdiction, of the authority given to Templars and Hospitallers and other unattached monks dependent on Rome, who wandered through the realm, suspending the clergy and laying excommunication and interdict as they willed upon lay and cleric alike. They complained no less feelingly of the bestowal of benefices and pensions out of the French Church upon Italians and other foreigners with whom the country was flooded, and of the intolerable levies and exactions imposed by the Papal Legates and Nuncios. Their cause was seconded by another deputation, whose tone was even less pleasing to the Papal ears—the envoys of the Barons. They had the open support of the King,* who forbade the French prelates, on pain of forfeiting their lands, to comply with the requisitions of a fresh horde of Franciscan and Dominican monks whom the Pope had let loose upon France. In the face of such opposition the Pope was obliged to temporize, though he was far from yielding.

Abroad, Blanche shaped the foreign policy which her son pursued, and which aimed at holding the English in check, and at maintaining friendship with the Emperor, whilst holding the balance between him and the Pope. On behalf of himself and his brother, Louis refused the imperial crown which the Pope offered him ; but when the Emperor, Frederick II., detained the French prelates who had gone to Rome to attend a council, Louis firmly demanded and obtained their release. The quarrel between the Papacy and the Empire culminated in the

* Although the document known as the Pragmatic Sanction, attributed to Louis, is certainly a later invention, it does represent the principles in accordance with which Louis acted towards the Pope in defence of the liberties of the Gallican Church. It contains nothing of importance which is not contained in the Memorial addressed to the Pope in 1247, which Louis probably signed and certainly supported.

flight of the Pope from Italy. In 1245 Innocent IV. took refuge at Lyons, solemnly deposed the Emperor, and called upon all Christian Princes to march to the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre.

Louis had been more active than either Pope or Emperor in forwarding the ill-fated Crusade of 1239. And now Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of the Khorasmian invaders, and passed for ever out of the hands of the Christians. Rumours of that disaster had arrived when Louis lay sick unto death from a recurrence of a fever contracted on his Poitevin campaign. Waking from a trance which had seemed likely to end in death, the King took the Cross (1244). Nor could the prayers and entreaties of the Queen-mother and his counsellors shake his resolution when he recovered. Everywhere, save in the heart of the King, the enthusiasm of the Crusades had died away. "A man can win heaven well enough in this country," the trouvère Rutebeuf sang, and so expressed the general disillusionment of his day. But with unflinching determination and unflagging zeal Louis proceeded to set his kingdom in order and to prepare for the Holy War. Truces were made, funds raised, criers proclaimed throughout the land that if any man had cause of complaint, he should lay the matter before the King. Blanche was appointed Regent. Four years thus elapsed. Never, says an old writer, was an imprudent design more prudently executed. At length, in 1248, Louis set sail for Cyprus from Aigues Mortes. That was the only place capable of being converted into a Mediterranean port in his dominions, and he had long been preparing it as the scene of his departure. Some of the Crusaders embarked at Marseilles, notably Louis' brave and faithful Seneschal of Champagne, the Sire de Joinville, the historian of the expedition and the fascinating biographer of his royal master and hero.

The capture of Damietta was followed by the Pyrrhic victory of Mansourah. Wasted by disease, weakened by indecision, the Crusaders and the French King were presently surrounded by the Saracens, and obliged to yield themselves prisoners to the Sultan and to pay a heavy ransom for their release. Accompanied by but a few Crusaders, Louis landed in the Holy Land. He stayed there for four more years, until the news of the death of his mother compelled his return.

Then he sailed from Acre, 1254, and landed at Hyères. The voyage had been one of great peril, but, like every trial and disaster upon the Crusade, hardship and danger had only served to bring out the Christian fortitude, gentleness, and consideration for others, which were the King's most shining virtues. The pages of Joinville are full of beautiful instances of the King's truly saintly qualities. He returned indeed a broken and disappointed man; all his careful preparations had ended in failure and defeat, in the loss of a fine army and the expenditure of a huge treasure. But whereas other unsuccessful leaders have had to endure the resentment and ingratitude of their people, Louis on his return was welcomed with joy as if he had been a conqueror. For he had won at least the hearts of his people by the exceeding nobility of his conduct.

His presence, too, was sorely needed in France.

The firm and capable hand of the Regent had guided the destinies of France through the difficult period of Louis' misfortunes. She had supplied the immense sums needed for the sojourn in Egypt and Palestine without rousing opposition. She had subdued the curious outburst of religious and anti-clerical frenzy known as the Shepherds' Crusade. For the news of the captivity of their beloved King had stirred the people deeply. And at the call of a Hungarian monk, who said that he held

the written mandate of the Virgin (1251) to summon shepherds and peasants to the recovery of the Holy Land and the deliverance of the King of France, a vast throng of country people flocked to the banner of the Lamb. The undisciplined crowd plundered the towns as they passed through them, robbing more particularly the clergy, whose wealth and hypocrisy their own zealous preachers held up to scorn, and whose exactions and abuse of their authority were partly responsible for this outbreak of fanaticism. Blanche had at first given countenance to the *Pastoureaux*. But the violent scenes which occurred at Orleans compelled her to change her policy. The Shepherds were attacked and dispersed, and the movement collapsed as suddenly as it had arisen.

Louis was fortunate in his epoch. His country had already emerged from the worst disorders, and was most in need of the soothing effects of the benevolent government which he was pre-eminently qualified to give it. For, from the exertions of his less scrupulous forefathers, he had inherited sufficient power to enable him to exercise the milder virtues of justice and charity with the most beneficial effect. Nor was he wanting in firmness and courage when occasion arose.

With the same sweet reasonableness which had distinguished his conduct in the East, he set himself, on his return, to make amends for his absence by restoring order and inaugurating reforms. Meanwhile he acted as a peacemaker between his great vassals, and also between foreign rulers. His chief reforms were, characteristically, in the direction of the good administration of justice, the best index of good government. Almost his first step was to issue an ordinance containing instructions wisely calculated to secure the integrity of the royal officers, such as Bailiffs, Provosts, and Viscounts. As a further check, a system of *enquesters* was set up, forming

yet another link in the chain between the local and central authorities. The function of the *enquesters* was to watch over the local administration, and to correct any miscarriage of justice due to the royal agents. The Barons' lawless practice of settling their quarrels by private warfare was forbidden; the ancient custom by which either party in a suit might appeal from the judge's decision to the issue of single combat was abolished. The suitor's remedy, if he were discontented with the verdict of the Baron's court, now lay only in appeal to the court of the King. The proof of witnesses and procedure by writ were substituted for the violence and doubtful justice of the "judicial duel."

It was, apparently, in order to deal with the increasing amount of legal business entailed by these reforms and the spread of the King's justice that the Parliament of France was now regularly summoned to meet at Paris three or four times a year. The *Parlement* was that part of the King's Court or Council which was concerned with legal and judicial business. As its work became more clearly specialized, it came to consist of trained lawyers, and to be recognized as the supreme court of justice in France. The great vassals and Crown officials, not learned in the technicalities of the jurisprudence which was spreading over Europe through the medium of the Universities since Irnerius lectured at Bologna, found their voices of no account in judgments to be pronounced on written procedure. Leaving judicial matters to this body, therefore, the Great Council devoted itself to the administrative and political affairs of the realm, whilst financial business was dealt with by a committee known as the *Maîtres des Comptes*, who met first in 1249, and were soon established as a permanent body.

As the reputed author of the *Établissements de Saint Louis*, Louis IX. has received more than his meed of

praise. He has been hailed as the first giver of a Code to his people. But the *Établissements* are merely an unofficial compilation of the customary practice of civil and feudal laws. It was in this reign, too, that the rules of the trades guilds were reduced to writing in the *Livre des Métiers* by Étienne Boileau, whom Louis had appointed as Provost of Paris.

In the thirteenth century the communes, which had by joint effort of rich and poor wrested their privileges



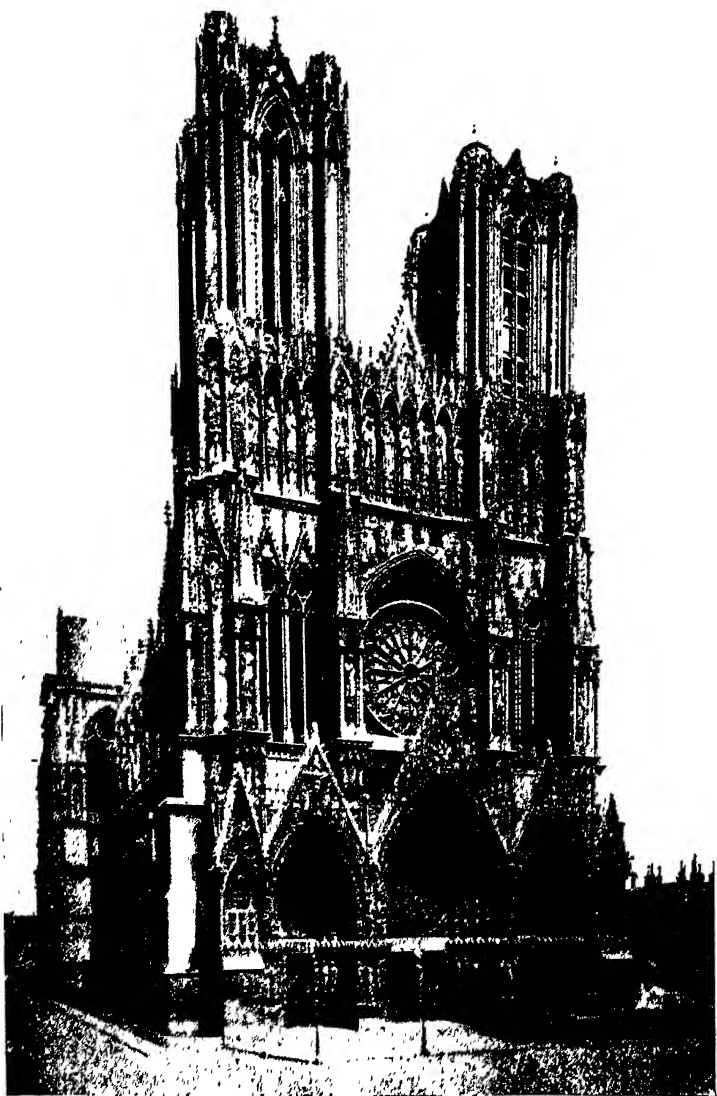
PARIS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

from the great Seigneurs in the last century, had passed into the hands of a merchant aristocracy, little to the advantage of the poorer classes. In many cases the proletariat of the communes rose against the patriciate, revolting against the unjust share of power which the latter had appropriated, and which was not compensated for in their eyes by the concession of a larger share in the taxes. Such social troubles could only profit the Seigneurs, against whom the communes had been established, and the royal authority. The extension of the

royal power was accompanied by an extension of the contributions exacted for the royal treasury. But in other directions it worked for the good of the realm. Whilst a special body of armed police was instituted to keep law and order in the hitherto rough and dangerous streets of Paris (1254), travelling in the country was rendered safer by insistence that each Seigneur must be responsible for policing the highways in his domain. Louis developed the trade of the country by protecting foreign merchants, and by a measure of far-reaching economic importance—the establishment of a uniform coinage. Hitherto commerce had been much impeded by the existence of innumerable currencies, of varying degrees of baseness, which were put into circulation by the Barons, whose right it was to coin money. Louis issued an ordinance (1263) that royal money alone should circulate in the domain, that it should pass equally with that of the Barons throughout the realm, and that the Barons should not coin gold pieces.

Louis' attitude towards the communes was, indeed, exactly similar to his policy towards feudal independence and the clergy. It was to establish the supremacy of the Crown.* While steadily watching over the welfare of the citizens, he worked no less steadily in the direction of putting an end to communal independence, by transforming the communes into royal cities. A number of new royal towns were also created by the grant of charters. They were left free to choose officials to manage their internal affairs, but they were dependent on the protection of the King, and answerable to him. The normal extension of the principle of centralization put an end to the existence of the separate, independent communes. And with their disappearance begins the growth of the Third Estate as a political factor. For, to the First Estate of

* See p. 76.



Paul Lemon.

RHEIMS CATHEDRAL. *Page 21, etc.*

Mainly built between 1211 and 1241; the façade added in the next century. The scene of the crowning of many of the French kings.

the clergy and the Second Estate of the nobles, was now added the burgher class. The agricultural population was to remain for centuries almost entirely without any political influence.

After his return from Palestine, Louis had become more and more austere, renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world and imposing upon himself the severest penances.

He showed his piety, according to the lights of his day, not only by his personal exercise of religion, but also by his hatred of Jews and heretics and his eager acquisition of relics. The Crown of Thorns, which the Emperor Baldwin had presented to him, and a portion of the True Cross, were his most precious possessions. It was to furnish these relics with a fitting shrine that he built the most beautiful and enduring monument of his reign, the exquisite Sainte Chapelle in Paris, one of the most perfect gems in the crown of French Gothic architecture.

It was with the utmost reluctance that Louis had relinquished the Cross upon his return to France. The news of fresh disasters suffered by the Christians in Palestine at the hands of the Tartars and the Sultan of Egypt, came to him as a Divine summons to take up the Cross once more. In 1267 he announced his determination to the *Parlement* at Paris. The dismay and entreaties of his councillors and people left him unmoved. His personal devotion was alone responsible for the last revival of an outworn enthusiasm, which had ceased to have the merit of defending Europe from threatened invasion.

After three years of preparation, Louis once more sailed from the port of Aigues Mortes with a fleet of Crusaders. He landed first at Carthage, hoping to convert the Sultan of Tunis. It was the height of summer. Heat and lack of water sowed the seeds of disease in the army. The enfeebled frame of Louis quickly fell a victim to it. His

body was brought back to France by his eldest son, Philip III., the Bold (Philippe le Hardi).*

When he died, he left the monarchy firmly established, the domains of France largely increased, his people better governed ; by his own life he had afforded an example of kingly virtues for which the world was the richer.

One of the causes which had directed the feet of the Crusaders to Africa was, no doubt, the policy of Charles of Anjou. He had accepted the kingdom of Naples and Sicily as a fief from Pope Urban IV. As King of Sicily he claimed tribute from Tunis. Payment had been refused, and in the success of the Crusaders Charles might hope for an opportunity of enforcing his claims. It was he who involved Philippe le Hardi in the only event of his fifteen years' reign which we need stop to record (1270-1285). The tyrannous oppression of this ambitious Prince had led to a massacre of Frenchmen in Sicily, known as the Sicilian Vespers (1282). That rising took place in conjunction with an invasion by Don Pedro, King of Aragon. On the death of his uncle (1285), Philippe took up the family quarrel of the Valois and, in order to punish the King of Aragon, crossed the Pyrenees with a magnificent army. It was the first war of conquest undertaken by the Capetians outside the proper boundaries of France. But the expedition proved a failure. Disease reduced the army whilst they besieged Gerona, and Philippe died at Perpignan on his way home. The granting of a patent of nobility to a commoner, and the permission given for commoners to enjoy the possession of fiefs, mark the further decay of feudal institutions in this reign. Nobility ceased to be an inalienable hereditary quality, and became a privilege to be conferred by the King.

* In 1234 Louis had married Margaret, daughter of Raymond Bérenger, Count of Provence, beautiful, accomplished, and trained by her mother, Beatrix of the House of Savoy, to be the worthy consort of a King.

IX

PHILIPPE LE BEL AND THE LAST OF THE CAPETIANS A.D. 1285—1328

PHILIPPE IV., le Bel (the Fair), was but seventeen when he came to the throne (1285), but he lost no time in increasing his domains. His marriage with the heiress of Navarre and Champagne had already brought him two large provinces. By a decree of the Parliament, La Marche and Angoumois were escheated to the Crown. The marriage of his second son added the Franche Comté to the royal domain. It was necessary to have recourse to less peaceful methods in order to round off his domain by the acquisition of the territories of such powerful vassals as the Duke of Brittany, the Count of Flanders, and of Edward I. of England, Duke of Guienne. Taking advantage of Edward's wars with the Welsh and Scotch, Philippe sent an army into Guienne; a French fleet pillaged Dover, and the King himself led an army into Flanders. The Count had declared for England, for, like Guienne, Flanders was bound to that country by close ties of commerce. Philippe beat the Flemings at Furnes. The intervention of Pope Boniface VIII. brought about a peace with England. The bond was sealed by the marriage of Edward's son with Isabel, daughter of France, the innocent Helen of her country, for this union was later on to prove the pretext of a hundred years of war (1299). The compact left each of the rival Kings, after four years

of warfare, free to deal with the allies which the other had deserted. Edward pursued his campaigns in Scotland; the Count of Flanders submitted to Philippe. But there was a spirit of independence in the strongly walled towns of Flanders, born of conscious strength and commercial success and constant struggle with the sea. The Flemish burghers, proud of their privileges and hard-won wealth, were not inclined to brook the arrogance and oppression of the French Governor, James de Châtillon, who taxed them heavily and deprived them of their municipal liberties. They rose against their conquerors. In Bruges alone 3,000 Frenchmen were massacred. Philippe sent Count Robert of Artois to chastise the rebels. Twenty thousand Flemings awaited him behind a canal at Courtrai (1302). The feudal nobility, the flower of French chivalry, with presumptuous rashness dashed contemptuously at the horde of unmounted commoners, plunged into the canal that covered the Flemish lines, and were speared to death whilst their comrades pressed upon them from the rear. It was a presage of Crécy, Poitiers, Agincourt. The gold spurs of the knights were gathered, it is said, by the bushel after the battle, and the victory was known as the Battle of the Spurs. Philippe hastened to avenge himself. Under pretext of the sumptuary laws, possessors of gold and silver plate were compelled to bring it to the mint, and were paid for it in the debased coinage into which it was converted. The King sold many serfs their freedom and many commoners titles of nobility. A feudal levy was raised, every property yielding 100 livres of rent being ordered to supply one horseman, and the rest in proportion. Genoese galleys were hired for an attack by sea. It was a royal effort and a great one, but that of the Flemish people was greater still. Eighty thousand men issued from the towns to defend their liberty. Philippe, who

was at the height of his quarrel with Boniface, temporized, not daring to risk disaster in such a crisis. On the death of the Pope, however, he resumed the offensive. His fleet gained a victory at Zieriksee; at Mons-en-Puelle the King himself avenged the defeat of Courtrai, and then advanced upon Lille (1304). The Flemings were defeated, but not subdued. In a few days they gathered in numbers as great as ever, eager for battle. “ But it rains Flemings ! ” cried the astonished King, who thought he had exterminated them. In face of such resistance he decided to treat. The Flemings ceded Douai, Lille, Béthune, Orchies, and all French-speaking Flanders between the Lys and the Scheldt. In return he restored the Count of Flanders, who did him homage as his vassal. “ So French royalty receded before Flemish democracy, as did German royalty almost at the same time before Swiss democracy. The communes of France remained isolated and succumbed ; in Flanders and in Switzerland they united and triumphed. ” *

The chief episode of this period is the quarrel between Philippe and the Papacy. It marks the end of the period in which the Popes, thanks to their support of the Capetians, had been able to confront their adversaries in Italy, and to establish the theory of the supreme authority of the Holy See over the national Churches. That theory, if rashly put into practice by too proud and ambitious a Pontiff, was certain to provoke the reaction for which all Europe was ripe. The opposition to the political and financial hegemony of Rome was ready to break out in France as in England and Germany. The pretensions of Boniface VIII. caused the smouldering ashes of discontent to break into flames.

The Popes had granted an extra impost of a tithe upon the property of the clergy for the “ Crusade ” against the

* Victoire Duruy, *Histoire de France*.

King of Aragon ; but when the King of France wished to raise a similar contribution for his war with England (1294), some of the clergy proved recalcitrant, and protested to Rome.

Boniface seized the opportunity afforded him by the complaints of the clergy against the exactions of Philippe to launch the Bull *Clericis laicos* (February, 1296). By that Bull the clergy were forbidden to pay taxes to temporal rulers. A second Bull (*Ineffabilis amor*) explained that this might be done with the Pope's consent. It also demanded an explanation of Philippe's decree (August, 1296) forbidding the exportation of gold, merchandise, and arms. That measure was intended to injure England and Holland, but it equally affected the revenues of Rome. It was regarded, and presumably in part intended, as a retort to the pretensions of the Pope. And Philippe was threatened with excommunication.

The literature of the day bears witness to the intense indignation with which this Bull was received at the Court of France. Boniface, embarrassed by political and financial difficulties in Italy, yielded to the storm. The Bulls *Etsi de statu* (July, 1297) and *Noveritis nos* formally renounced the claims that had been advanced to defend the property of the clergy against the exactions of the King. The reconciliation was apparently complete. Terrified lest the French King should aid his enemies—the Colonna in Italy and the Aragonais in Sicily—the Pope heaped favours upon him. St. Louis was canonized. But the air of peace was deceptive. Philippe used his success to increase his exactions from the clergy. And no sooner had the Pope settled his affairs at home than, buoyed up by the success of the Jubilee of 1300 and the support of the Flemings, who hailed him as the universal judge in things temporal as

well as spiritual, the indefatigable old man returned to the attack.

Bernard de Saisset, a Papal Legate, who had been appointed by Boniface to the See of Pamiers, was accused (1301) of having attempted to form a conspiracy to rid the county of Toulouse from French domination, and of having uttered in his cups treasonable language against Philippe. He was cited to appear before the King at Senlis. There his crimes were recited before the Assembly of Barons, who clamoured for his blood. He was delivered into the custody of the Archbishop of Narbonne, who was requested to pronounce his canonical degradation in order that he might be punished by the secular arm. It was contrary to the laws of the Church that a Bishop should be brought up for judgment before a lay court. The Archbishop, much embarrassed, took Saisset into his custody, and referred the matter to the Pope. At the same time envoys were sent from France, requesting Boniface to strip Saisset of his clerical privileges. The answer of the Pope was the issue of the famous Bulls *Salvator mundi* and *Ausculda fili*.

By the first he revoked his recent concessions, and forbade the French prelates to make any grant to Philippe without his leave. By the second he asserted that the Crown of France was subject to the Supreme Head of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, constituted by God above Kings and kingdoms, to build and plant, to uproot and to destroy (December, 1301). He summoned the French Bishops to attend a Council at Rome in November, 1302, to deliberate upon Philippe's transgressions.

The temper in which Philippe received this attack is undoubtedly indicated by a document which has been too readily accepted as being what it professes to be, the actual reply of the King. In it his "Supreme Fatuity," the Pope, is informed that the King's temporal power

is subject to no person whatsoever. The rule of Roman law, which the lawyers who governed under Philippe were anxious to establish, gives to the King absolute power, including that of interfering in the administration of the diocese. But whatever may have been the exact words in which Philippe replied to the Bulls of 1301, he replied in kind to the Pope's summons to Rome. He convoked an Assembly of the Realm to meet at Notre Dame on April 10, 1302. It consisted of the representatives of the Three Estates—clergy, nobles, and burghers—and was summoned "to deliberate upon certain affairs nearly touching the King and the realm, all and each." The Pope had accused Philippe of tyrannizing over his subjects, oppressing the Church, and offending the nobles. He had summoned a Council at Rome to put an end to these oppressions. By the unanimous vote of the Estates, Philippe was able to show that he commanded the confidence of his people, and that, ranged behind him in his resistance to Ultramontane interference, was the full force of French patriotism. But, encouraged by the news of the French King's humiliation at Courtrai, Boniface held the synod in November, and issued the Bull *Unam sanctam*. This was the most absolute assertion of the doctrine of theocracy formulated in the Middle Ages, and has gained its author the title of the "Great" amongst those who approve of it. Submission to the Roman Pontiff was declared to be a necessary condition of salvation. Several French Bishops had attended the Council at Rome, in spite of Philippe's prohibition. A general sentence of excommunication was now passed against anyone who should prevent the faithful from presenting themselves at the Holy See. A Legate was despatched with an ultimatum to the King. The charges alleged against him were solemnly discussed at an assembly of prelates and Barons summoned by Philippe

in January, 1303. A respectful answer was returned. But Boniface treated the reply as frivolous. The Legate was instructed to demand complete submission, or else to declare the King excommunicate (April, 1303). But the French Court, in which the influence of William of Nogaret was now supreme, had already decided upon extreme measures. An assembly of prelates, Barons, and lawyers, was held at the Louvre on March 12, at which it was proposed to summon a General Council to depose the Pope. The Archdeacon of Coutances, who was bringing the Bull of excommunication, was seized at Troyes, and the Bull taken from him before it could be published.

On June 13 a great assembly was held at the Louvre. The vices, heresies, and crimes, with which the Pope was charged, were formulated in an indictment of twenty-nine articles. It was decided to summon the General Council. Meanwhile William of Nogaret had been despatched to Italy. In alliance with the Colonna, the Pope at Anagni published a Bull in which he threatened Philippe, but did not pronounce his deposition. It was answered by a *coup d'état*. At the head of some hundreds of followers, William entered Anagni. The Pope was seized and confined to his room.* But the plan of transporting him to the Council at Lyons failed. The people of Anagni rose and expelled the invaders. The aged Pope died of rage at his humiliation.

The issue of the struggle depended upon the choice of his successor. Benedict XI., an Italian follower of Boniface, seems to have aimed at a compromise by striking at the King's advisers and instruments, notably William de Nogaret, and excusing the King. He died, probably of poison, in July, 1304. If the King of France was to triumph, it was evidently necessary that a Frenchman

* The story that he was insulted and struck by Colonna is probably apocryphal.

who would do his bidding should be set upon the pontifical throne. A desperate struggle ensued in the Sacred College between the partisans of France and the Roman tradition. At the end of eleven months, Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, was elected. The French policy had scored a complete victory. The subsequent conduct of Clement V. seems to make it certain that he had, as a candidate, come to an understanding with the King. He abandoned Rome, and settled at Avignon (1308), a Papal possession beyond the Alps, but where he was directly under the influence of France. So began the "Babylonish Captivity," as the Italians called it, the sojourn of the Popes at Avignon, which was to last until 1376. The docile Pope issued decrees by which the acts and sentences of Boniface were revoked, and Philippe was praised for his "good and just zeal" (1311).

But it was not merely by such acts of academic recantation that Clement must pay the price of his subjection.

The Order of Templars had been founded (1118) as a body of "poor knights of Christ," whose first object was to safeguard pilgrims on their way to the Holy Sepulchre. The Order had increased and developed rapidly, and planted its temples and fortresses all over Europe. The soldier-monks had amassed riches, in lands and precious metals, had organized a hierarchy, and had become in some sort the bankers and treasurers of Christendom. Their wealth had provoked the cupidity of Philippe. The laying up of a vast treasure upon earth by a community, each member of which was vowed to poverty, was certain to expose them to attack before long. Nor could it be denied that they had done nothing for many years to redeem their vows to succour Jerusalem or protect pilgrims. The secrecy with which their affairs were conducted gave rise to rumours of heretical

beliefs, impious mysteries, and cynical debaucheries practised by them. In 1307 pressure began to be put upon the Pope by Philippe to inquire into the crimes with which they were charged. The case against them was prepared with the utmost unscrupulousness by William de Nogaret. In October, Jacques de Molai, the Grand Master, and all the Templars in France were arrested and their goods seized in the name of the Inquisition, on the grounds of heresy. Confession was wrung from them by the extremity of torture.

As in 1302, so in 1308, Philippe wished to strengthen his hand by a display of popular support. An assembly was summoned to meet at Tours in May. The clergy and Barons received a personal summons; each important town was invited to send two deputies, and by the term "important towns" even mere villages were included, who sent representatives chosen by universal suffrage or nominated by the Seigneur or by the upper *bourgeoisie*. The evidence was placed before these deputies, and the King was able to announce that the whole people of France was with him in wishing to purge the world of these pestilent knights. The Provincial Councils also condemned them. The Archbishop of Sens and his suffragans sent fifty-four Templars, who had retracted the confessions wrung from them by torture, to be burnt at the stake. The Order itself was dissolved by the Pope at the Council of Vienne (1312). Their property was assigned to the Hospitallers, but a large proportion of the spoil was secured by the King. The Grand Master, Molai, and the Preceptor of Normandy, Geoffroi de Charnai, who had recanted their confession, and declared the charges against their Order groundless, were tried by three Cardinals appointed by Clement V., and suffered martyrdom at Paris.

The Templars were not the only class who had to suffer

for Philippe's need of money. The Jews (1306) and the Lombard bankers (1311) were persecuted, their property confiscated, and themselves expelled from the kingdom. Such measures filled the royal coffers for the moment, but could only end by impoverishing the country. Not less disastrous, though temporarily successful in providing the sinews of war for the King, was the alternate debasing and raising of the coinage established by St. Louis. This resource, so fatal to commerce and sound finance, was introduced by Philippe. The temptation of resorting to it, regardless of consequences, proved too great to generations of his successors on the throne of France.

In England the people profited by the financial embarrassments of Edward I., the contemporary of Philippe, to extort constitutional concessions from their monarch. In France, as we have seen, the Church remained absolutely subservient to the King ; but amongst the nobles and the people who had to endure his exactions a lively spirit of discontent was excited. The principle that the King could require universal service for the defence of the realm, and therefore, by commutation, exact the pecuniary value of such service, had been established ; but the process of evolution by which the King could impose uniform taxes for the government of the country was only beginning. When Philippe was in need of great sums for the war against England, he was obliged to exercise the royal authority by way of loans, more or less voluntary, from rich bankers and citizens, or taxes, such as the *maltôte*, levied on commercial transactions, or subsidies, imposts laid on capital or income. It was in the collection of these taxes that difficulties arose and discontent made itself manifest. Riots occurred in places ; the Seigneurs wrung from the King the restoration of some rights, such as that of the judicial combat

and the right of private warfare, which they had lost in previous reigns. And towards the end of the reign a movement took place which might well have had the most far-reaching consequences, if it had been a movement, not of a class only, but of the whole nation working for political freedom. Leagues of Barons were formed to resist the imposition of the royal taxes. A confederation of the various leagues next took shape. Philippe yielded to the storm. He had revoked the subvention which was the occasion of the agitation, and had summoned the malcontents to Paris, when he died. His successor, Louis X., gave a grudging and guarded assent to their demands in the form of charters granted to the leagues. Those demands were wholly reactionary, consisting of the restoration of seigniorial rights, such as private warfare and so forth. Neither the clergy nor the *bourgeoisie* associated themselves with the leagues, but rather ranged themselves on the side of the King. The movement therefore proved abortive.

The leagues died away, but the political activity which Philippe's appeals to public opinion had called forth did not die away. Historians, however, are apt to overestimate Philippe's summoning of the Assembly as an innovation. The term "Estates General" was not applied to these assemblies till a much later date. Nor is it true to say that in 1302 the *bourgeoisie* for the first time took part in the affairs of State. We have seen that it was a very ancient custom for the King to summon to his councils people from all parts of his kingdom, plenary assemblies such as Louis IX. convened before the Crusade in Egypt. The germ of political life was there, and Philippe developed that germ because he had occasion to associate the nation with him more frequently and more intimately than former Kings had done. He secured the expression of public approval of his extraordinary acts by convoking

the representatives of the clergy, nobility, and commons, and asking their opinion. The importance of the occasions on which the assemblies of 1302 and 1308 were summoned has led to their being wrongly regarded as initiating a system of national representation.

By a decree in the year 1302 Philippe defined and stereotyped certain changes which had been coming into existence since the reign of Louis IX. We have seen that the increase of judicial, financial, and administrative business had led naturally to a division of the King's Court into three distinct bodies. The functions of the three departments were now clearly differentiated and defined. Political and administrative business was reserved to the Great Council of the King, together with certain judiciary powers in the case of appeals. The second department of the Council was the judiciary *Parlement*; "his sovereign court of justice, which claimed to exercise its jurisdiction over the whole kingdom, was destined to be the great instrument employed by future Kings to bring the whole of France under their absolute authority."* Philippe appointed it to meet twice a year in Paris, but, with the rapid increase of legal business, it soon became a permanent court, sitting in the Palais de Justice. The function of the *Parlement*, however, was not exclusively judicial, for the duty of registering the royal edicts was assigned to it. This right was to prove of importance when, in later days, the *Parlement* declared that no edict was valid until it had been so registered, and thereby claimed the right of remonstra-

* Duruy. The *Parlement* was itself divided into three courts—the *Grand Chambre*, which dealt with appeals; the *Chambre des Enquêtes*, which prepared appeals from the lower courts for further hearing; and the *Chambre des Requêtes*, which decided the cases of first instance brought before the *Parlement*. Philippe also recognized, and brought under royal control, the old Provincial Courts of Justice, such as the *Échiquier* of Normandy and the *Grands Jours* of Troyes.

ting with the King, and even of vetoing his decrees. The third department of the Council was the Exchequer Court, the *Chambre des Comptes*.

Philippe's dealings with the Church have caused him to be painted as a monster of iniquity. That he was ambitious, and unscrupulous in obtaining the means by which to gratify his ambitions, cannot be denied ; but his work for France was of supreme importance. Not only did he add to the royal domain the conquests and acquisitions we have referred to, but, in organizing the new and necessary system of royal administration, in place of that of the feudal lords whose power royalty had assumed, he showed himself vigorous and statesmanlike, if despotic. When he came to the throne French civilization was in a state of transition. The feudal system was gone. In its place a new system of administration had been called into existence. The royal domain extended over nearly two-thirds of France, and a host of officials was required to administer it. The judicial system was being rapidly centralized. The feudal system, by which vassals of the Crown were obliged to give military service, was outworn. The need of a regular army and navy, or of mercenaries, was imperative ; but lawyers, officials, soldiers, and sailors postulate a national revenue. It is to the discredit of Philippe, and the legists who advised him, that in his efforts to solve the new financial problem of a national budget he used devices the most unjust and the most foolish, because commercially disastrous.

Philippe was succeeded by his son, Louis X. (le Hutin, the Quarrelsome). During his brief reign (1314-1316) the feudal reaction carried the day. The reign of the legists was over. The Barons, headed by the King's uncle, Charles de Valois, turned on the councillors of the late King and secured their condemnation on wild

charges of sorcery. Enguerrand de Marigny, his chief Minister, was hanged ; the Chancellor, Pierre de Latilly, William de Nogaret, and Raoul de Presle, were imprisoned, tortured, and ruined. Many of the old privileges of the nobility were revived. An unsuccessful campaign in Flanders left the King without strength or authority to check the Barons. The country was relapsing into feudal anarchy, when a draught of cold wine, following upon a severe game of tennis, put an end to his life. His widow was delivered of a posthumous son some months later, who died immediately. His first wife, Marguerite of Burgundy, had died in prison in the Château-Gaillard, where Philippe the Fair had confined her, as a punishment for her scandalous behaviour at his Court. She left a daughter, Jeanne. Her claim was passed over. Philippe V., the King's brother (le Long, the Tall), who had acted as Regent during the pregnancy of Louis' widow, was hailed as King. He devoted his energies to re-establishing and developing the organization of Philippe the Fair. A terrible persecution of the Jews and lepers disgraced his reign. He was contemplating the heroic step of introducing a uniform system of weights and measures and currency throughout the kingdom, when he died (1322). His brother, Charles IV. (le Bel), was at once accepted as King, the claims of Philippe's daughters being ignored. He reigned but six years, during which he was chiefly occupied in endeavouring to raise funds to carry on his government ; whilst the party of the nobles, which had been repressed by Philippe, regained its ascendancy. Charles died leaving only daughters (1328).

Philippe the Fair had been dead but fourteen years, and already the House of Capet, which had seemed so strongly established, both in numbers and in kind, was extinct in the male line. The monarchy, which under



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THE PAPAL PALACE AT AVIGNON. Pages 122 and 173.

In this fourteenth-century fortress, mainly built by Benedict XII., part of the century of "exile" (1308-1411) from Rome was passed by the Popes.

Philippe had appeared as strongly planted as it was absolute, and rooted in a highly-organized administration, was already shaken to its foundations. If the seeds of constitutional government had been sown in the establishment of regular law courts, and in the recognition of the Estates General, their growth was checked for centuries.

The power of the old territorial nobility had been destroyed, and France, united under a King, might have been expected to grow prosperous and content, and to develop some system of representative government; but for a hundred years or more she was to be plunged into the utmost misery of anarchy and war, and to lie at the mercy of foreign invaders and a new royal nobility, whilst the power of the Crown was reduced to almost nothing. Two widely different causes acting in the same direction appear to have been responsible for this catastrophe. The task of annexing Aquitaine, the last and necessary step in the wise policy of creating French territorial unity, might have been accomplished, not without dust and heat, if France had been united in the attempt, even though the difficulties of the last Capetian Kings show that she was hardly yet economically equal to the effort; but in the *féodalité apanagée*, the new royal nobility, which the French Kings had created in place of the old feudal baronage, a new disintegrating force, at least as selfish and fatally weakening, had sprung up within her borders. The system of giving appanages to their brothers and younger sons was one against which the Kings of France might well have taken warning from the history of their Frankish predecessors; but from Henri I. onwards, by gift or testament, they had adopted this practice. As a method of administration it would have been, no doubt, excellent, if it had not been inevitable that the new nobility would prove as eager

for independence, and as reckless of the public weal, as the old.*

* Henri I. made his brother Duke of Normandy ; Louis VI. gave the county of Dreux to one of his sons ; Philippe Auguste, the counties of Boulogne, Domfront, Mortain, and Clermont, to one of his. Louis VIII. left Artois to his second son, Anjou and Maine to his third, Poitou and Auvergne to his fourth. Louis IX. gave the county of Toulouse to his brother, Count of Artois ; Provence to his brother Charles ; and the county of Clermont to his son Robert. The English Kings were no wiser, and their country paid the penalty in the Wars of the Roses.

X

THE VALOIS KINGS AND THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR A.D. 1328—1364

THE House of Capet was extinct. When Charles IV., the last son of Philippe the Fair, died (1328), he left only daughters. But his widow was enceinte. What if the expected child proved to be a daughter? In 1316, on the death of Louis X., and in 1322, on the death of Philippe V., the daughters of the late Kings had been passed by. If the principle were accepted that a woman could not ascend the throne of France, it might yet be contended that the throne should pass to the male heir of the female line. If this were so, Edward III. of England, grandson of Philippe the Fair by his mother, Isabel of France, and nephew of the three last Kings, would inherit the crown of France. Otherwise Philippe de Valois, son of Charles de Valois and nephew of Philippe the Fair, would reign. A great assembly was held at Paris to appoint a Regent. The claims of Edward were put forward. But there was already a strong national feeling against the idea of establishing an English King in France. The Barons declared that by custom no woman, and consequently no male heir through her, could succeed to the kingdom of France. Philippe was appointed Regent. The expected child was born, and was a girl. Two months later Philippe VI. was anointed King at Rheims (May 29, 1328), and celebrated his coronation with all the gay splendour dear to chivalry.

He assigned Navarre to Jeanne, Countess of Evreux, daughter of Louis X., but kept Champagne and Brie, for which he gave her compensation.

The accession of Philippe involved the ascendancy of that new nobility which we have just described. For the House of Valois had always identified itself with their interests and ideas, as against that of the legists and other councillors of the late Kings.

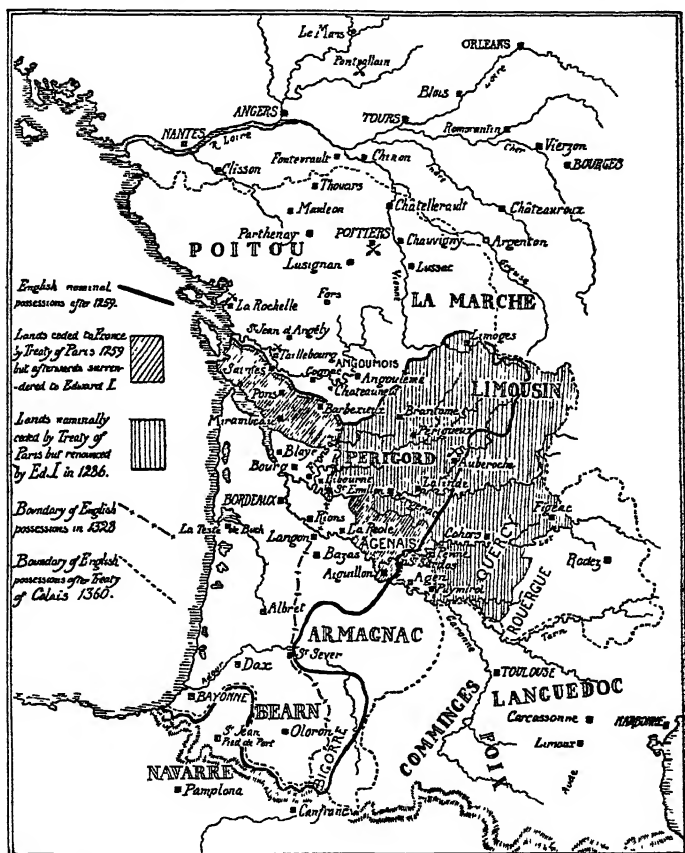
Bruges and other cities had revolted against the oppressive taxation of Louis, Count of Flanders. He appealed to Philippe for help, when he came to do him homage in 1328. Philippe seized the opportunity of beginning his reign in warlike fashion. He summoned his Barons, and they flocked to the banner of the fleur-de-lis, when it was unfurled by so bold and chivalrous a King. The Flemings mustered on the hill of Cassel, and showed a bold front. From the walls of the town a large banner was hung with the insulting motto :

“ Quand ce coq ici chantera
Le Roi trouvé ci entrera.”

But the “upstart King” proved too strong for the burghers. They endeavoured to surprise his army, but were flung back and their force annihilated by the feudal array. The Count of Flanders was restored. He received a warning from Philippe that if he were called upon again he would come for his own profit. He took the hint, and established order by means of the most ferocious persecution. The prestige of this success confirmed Philippe on the throne. It was not without its effect upon Edward III. of England, who had hitherto not complied with Philippe’s summons to do him homage for Guienne and Ponthieu.

Yielding at last to threats of confiscation, he came to Amiens and grudgingly did homage (1329). But the

question was raised whether this homage should be simple, or *liege*, as Philippe insisted. It was not



SOUTH WESTERN FRANCE IN THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.

till two years later that the English King admitted that the homage done at Amiens must be considered *liege*.

It was at Amiens on the same occasion that Robert of Artois demanded justice of the King.

The appanage of Artois had descended to his aunt, Madame Mahaut. Great-grandson of Robert I., to whom Louis VIII., his father, had left Artois as an appanage, Robert had married the sister of Philippe VI. He had claimed the county, but his claim was set aside by the Court of Peers. He now demanded justice of the King, alleging that he was wrongfully kept out of his inheritance. He produced some forged documents to prove his case. At Madame Mahaut's instance these were seized. She and her heiress died suddenly of poison. Robert was convicted of forgery, his accomplice, Jeanne de Divion, burnt, his property confiscated, and he himself banished (1332). He was presently convicted of treason, on the usual charges of sorcery, and declared the King's enemy (1337). Meantime he had taken refuge at the Court of Edward III., where he was received with great honour.

Philippe was in close alliance with the Popes at Avignon. He took the Cross in 1332, and great preparations were made for a Crusade under the direction of Pope John XXII. But by 1336 it was seen that war with England was inevitable, and that the absence of the French King would be fatal to his kingdom. In view of the perilous situation of affairs in Europe, John's successor, Benedict XII., urged Philippe to abandon the Crusade.

Pious, well educated, a devoted father, Philippe was a man of large ideas and vague ambitions. Above all, he was a feudal King, a knight of chivalry. He delighted in the pomps and picturesque splendours of feudal society. Such occasions as the arming of his eldest son as a knight were celebrated by fêtes and tourneys on the most lavish scale. It was his pleasure to devise jousts and feats of arms and hunting arrays to be celebrated amidst scenes the most magnificent, in the famous park at Vincennes, that most chivalrous sojourn, as Froissart calls it, the brilliant scene-painter of these glittering spectacles.

For to record the battles and the tournaments of a reign which revived in so brilliant a fashion all the pageantry and splendour and romance of a dying order, to recount with lively and impartial admiration all the deeds of valour and chivalry and high emprise performed on the battle-fields of Europe, was given a chronicler, Jean Froissart, the Walter Scott of the Middle Ages, as Michelet happily termed him. His pen had the skill and magic to reproduce for us the atmosphere of surroundings in which he delighted, the last romantic glories of the Middle Ages, when Edward III. and Philippe VI. vied with one another in kingly rivalry to reproduce the scenes of the era of the Round Table. But beyond knights and ladies, festivals and tourneys, Froissart sees nothing at all. He is so blinded by the afterglow of chivalry in which his heroes move, that he takes no thought for the misery and misgovernment their actions involved. He cares nothing for the wrongs or aspirations of the common people. And yet it was they who must bear the burden of Philippe's extravagance, they who must suffer for his rashness in plunging the country into an interminable and disastrous war without having first organized the financial system of his kingdom, and without having first established a regular army to take the place of the spasmodic and limited military service and *arrière-ban** of feudal society. Whilst the towns were for the most part allowed to excuse themselves from military service by paying a contribution to the royal exchequer, and the footmen were foolishly despised, the knights, who thought themselves alone worthy of the profession of arms, were, thanks to an exaggerated development of armour, fast becoming

* *Arrière-ban* was a levy *en masse* in case of invasion. The feudal military service, limited to strict and narrow conditions of time and place, was inadequate for a prolonged and general war.

almost ridiculous on the battle-field. Encumbered by swords and lances of prodigious length and weight, encased in armour which rendered them incapable of moving after a fall, bound by rules of etiquette laid down by the romances of chivalry, they dashed into battle as if it were a tourney, to perish at the hands of the bowmen they despised.

Against this army of unpractical cavalry, acting without reference to a horde of footmen armed with slow and heavy crossbows, or merely with scythes, Edward III. was to put into the field a splendid infantry of men carefully trained from childhood to draw the English long yew bow, archers who could shoot three arrows to one of the crossbowmen.

England was a small nation, but united, and her army had been trained by her struggles with the Welsh and the Scots. Her weakness was that she had a hostile nation, Scotland, on her back ; and this weakness Philippe used to the uttermost ; but it was balanced by the strategical advantage of her position on the Continent. The English Kings now held, indeed, only the counties of Ponthieu and Montreuil, and a strip of territory running from Saintes to Bayonne, the fragmentary remains of the duchy of Guienne and old Aquitaine. But the country was bound closely to England by a profitable trade in the wines of Bordeaux, and by good and conciliatory administration.

The chroniclers, who are usually content with a picturesque and personal reason as the cause of great political events, attribute the outbreak of the war to the unfortunate suggestions of Robert of Artois, who was never weary of urging Edward to prosecute his claim to the French crown. But there were political and economical reasons which made a war between France and England a natural necessity. Ever since a Duke of Normandy

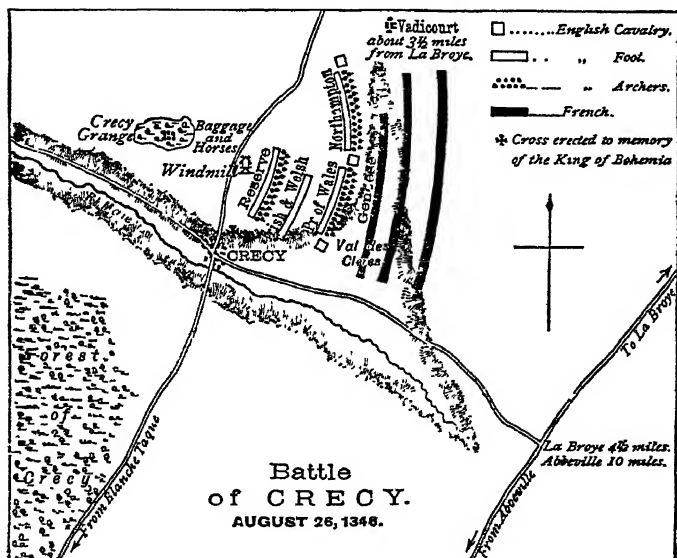
had become King of England, whilst remaining a vassal of France, it had been inevitable that sooner or later a war should be fought to the finish, and that either the two countries should be united under one crown, or that they should recede within their natural boundaries. Philippe caused the outbreak of this war at this moment by his policy of supporting the independence of Scotland. He had given asylum to David Bruce, and in 1336 prepared a great expedition to succour the defeated Scots. The privateers and pirates that had long roamed the Channel from Calais were reinforced by this great assembly of French ships. The English trade with Flanders was seriously threatened. By way of reply Edward announced his claim to the French crown, and determined to strike at France through the Low Countries. There was already much discontent in Flanders, owing to the severe rule of the Count, Louis de Nevers, who represented French aristocratic influence, since the Battle of Cassel. Now, Flanders was the great market for English wool, and depended on England for the raw material of textile industry. With a view to stirring up discontent in the Flemish industrial towns, Edward (August, 1336) forbade the export of wool from his kingdom. The Count of Flanders retorted by seizing the English merchants in Flanders, and Edward then seized all Flemish merchants in England. At the same time he secured the alliance of the Emperor Louis of Bavaria. He anticipated the policy of Godolphin and Pitt by buying the support of the poorer German Princes. Philippe accepted the challenge, and turned to the conquest of Guienne (May, 1337). In October Edward publicly assumed the title of King of France.

His claim was not serious or the cause of the war. It was rather a provocation or an act of war. The presence of the French fleet, backing up the French pirates in the

Channel, combined with the threatened predominance of French influence in Flanders, made war a commercial necessity for England. The assertion of Edward's claim to the French crown had its political effect in removing from the Flemings any scruple as to a revolt against their suzerain. They could now regard Philippe as a usurper.

Rallying to the cry of "Work and liberty!" the democratic craftsmen of the Flemish towns ranged themselves under the leadership of Jacques van Artevelde, a rich merchant of Ghent, against the hated feudalism of France. Edward readily came to an agreement with them, by which the restrictions on the wool trade were removed and the Flemish towns promised neutrality. He landed in September, 1339, but his campaign in Picardy was ineffective. His German allies were lukewarm, and the French King refused to give him battle. But in the following year he secured the definite alliance of the Flemish, and—acting, it is said, upon the advice of Artevelde—from that time publicly assumed the arms and title of the King of France. But the real struggle was at sea. Philippe had collected a large navy composed chiefly of ships from the Norman ports and Genoese mercenaries. They had scoured the Channel and sacked Portsmouth, Plymouth, Southampton. They were now moored off Sluys, and endeavoured to prevent Edward's landing, when he sailed from the Thames with a large army on June 22, 1340. But their leaders were at variance and foolish. They gave Edward the advantage of the sea, and huddled their 200 ships together in a narrow creek. Their massed crews were an easy mark for the English archers. Two days later they had lost all but thirty ships, and 20,000 men were slain or taken prisoners. The Flemings, who had helped Edward thus to annihilate the French fleet, joined him

in force on land. With Arteveldt and the Duke of Brabant, he laid siege to Tournai. But nothing came of the campaign. Edward was obliged to raise the siege. His resources were exhausted; the Scots were rising, the Flemings, discouraged by a check before St. Omer, melting away and returning to their looms; the French were meeting with successes in Guienne. He signed a truce for six months in September, 1340.



Hardly was the truce signed, when a war broke out in Brittany, which was to provide Edward with more zealous and martial allies than the Germans and Flemings.

The Duke of Brittany had died, and the succession was disputed between his niece, who was married to Charles of Blois, nephew of the King, and her uncle, the Count of Montfort. The King of England was soon in the field in support of the latter and the *Bretagne Bretonnante*, who favoured England, whilst Philippe took the

field on behalf of his nephew. The Papal Legates, however, persuaded them to a truce which was to last till Michaelmas, 1346, whilst the Pope acted as arbiter (January, 1343). But the turning-point of the war was destined to be reached before that date. Philippe treacherously seized, and beheaded without trial, on a vague charge of treason, some dozen Breton nobles who were friends of the English King. Edward regarded this outrage as putting an end to the truce. A successful campaign was inaugurated by the Earl of Derby in Guienne* (July, 1345). Edward presently prepared to sail to his assistance with a large fleet. Baffled by a storm, which drove him back to the English Channel, he landed at La Hogue de Saint Vast (July 22, 1346), and took Caen and Louviers, both wealthy and important towns. Marching along the left bank of the Seine, he was soon within reach of Paris.

Then, whilst Philippe hesitated, he crossed the river, and hastened by forced marches towards Picardy, where he hoped to join hands with the Flemings. Philippe pursued him in the direction of Amiens, but he managed to slip across the Somme at Blanquetaque before the French monarch could pin him, and was able to choose his own ground for the inevitable battle on the other side. He pitched his tents near the forest of Crécy (August 25, 1346). Next day the English army entrenched itself on a gentle slope in open ground. The 6,000 English archers, drawn up three deep, formed the centre; their flanks, the vulnerable points of longbowmen, were protected by 2,000 cavalry, who were formed into two solid dismounted phalanxes. A few thousand light infantry were interspersed among the lines of bowmen. So, calmly resting in their trenches, their bowstrings prudently protected from the rain beneath their hats, the archers awaited the onslaught of the French army. It consisted

of about 40,000 horse and foot, including a large force of Genoese crossbowmen. On August 26 Philippe made a long march from Abbeville in stormy weather. His men arrived before the English position wet and weary. But the French knights insisted upon an immediate attack. It was late in the afternoon. A fierce thunderstorm broke, and then the evening sun shone full in the faces of the French. The bowstrings of the Genoese were wetted. They fired their first round, then were shot down by a cloud of arrows that fell upon them thick as flakes of snow, whilst they were winding up their crossbows for a second volley. They turned tail, and the French knights charged them, indignant at their cowardice. Horse and foot were mingled in a confused mass beneath the deadly rain of English arrows. Those terrible shafts, sped by trained muscles from the six-foot bows of yew, pierced their vaunted chain armour like paper. With all the ardour and pride of chivalry, the French cavalry charged up the slope to slaughter those impertinent yeomen. Not one got within thirty yards of striking distance. Again and again, with superb courage, they charged. The result was always the same. They reached the English flanks, indeed, but could not break the protecting phalanxes. Fifteen hundred knights lay dead on the field; 12,000 Frenchmen perished. And hardly a blow had reached the English.

The old blind King of Bohemia fell fighting in the forefront of the battle. Philippe, who had fought with great courage, fled with a few followers to Amiens. Next day the English, in a thick fog, fell upon some contingents which were coming to join Philippe from the communes of Rouen and Beauvais, and cut them to pieces. Edward then sat down before Calais, determined to make himself master of the port which had been the chief home of the pirates who damaged his trade with Flanders. His

archers were of no use for an assault, but they rendered the siege effective. Philippe marched to the relief of the town (July, 1347), but was unable to effect it. Calais was reduced to extremities. Edward demanded that six citizens, barefooted, and clad only in their shirts, with halters round their necks, should bring him the keys of the citadel and surrender themselves to his discretion. A rich burgher, Eustache de Saint-Pierre, and five companions, nobly undertook this duty on behalf of their fellow-citizens, and only escaped with their lives thanks to the intercession of the English Queen.

Calais had fallen, and was destined to remain an English town for over 200 years. Flanders and the wool trade were safe. Edward had gained practically everything for which he had gone to war. A truce was made which was renewed from time to time till April, 1351.

But a military revolution had been revealed by the Battle of Crécy. That victory had come as a complete surprise to both parties, although the success of the English archers at the Battle of Sluys and Blanquetaque had foreshadowed it. Not only had the English commoners proved superior to the chivalry of France, but this superiority, lying in the astonishing missile power of the longbow, was for a generation the monopoly of the English. Only muscles trained from childhood could use it as those English archers had done. France, which had grown so fair and flourishing, lay at the mercy of a marauding army, which had but to land and live at its pleasure. The temptation was not likely to be resisted. A war of plunder began in 1351, and lasted till 1360. It is not necessary to recount the details of it.

The Battle of Poitiers only repeated the lesson of Crécy.

In a brilliant passage Michelet has pointed out that the Battle of Crécy involved also a social revolution. It was the death-blow of chivalry. "The whole chivalry

of the most chivalrous nation was exterminated by a small band of foot-soldiers. . . . The issue revealed a fact of which none dreamed till then, the military inefficiency of that feudal world, which had thought itself the only military world. Two easy massacres at Mons-en-Puelle and Cassel had retrieved the reputation they had lost at Courtrai. But from the day of Crécy there was many an unbeliever in the religion of nobility."

Philippe's resistance to the English was handicapped by lack of money, without which, and without regular military service, it was impossible to keep an army in the field. He had recourse to the States General* and Provincial to provide him with aids of men and subsidies. In 1346 they succeeded in extorting the concession that the new tax on salt (*gabelle*),† which had been imposed in 1343, and the impost on sales of merchandise, should be only temporary. With the consent of the Popes at Avignon, a tithe was levied annually upon the net incomes of the clergy, besides many forced loans. The coinage was debased.

The loss and misery caused by these measures was enhanced by the terrible scourge of the Black Death, which, coming from the East, reached the South of France in 1347, and spread northwards. The mortality in the crowded, insanitary towns was frightful. In Paris, where 800 persons died each day, over 50,000 perished. It is thought that half the population of France had succumbed before the plague abated (1349). The accumulation of horrors which afflicted the unhappy country led to a strange outburst of religious fanaticism. Bands of Flagellants, starting from the Rhine country, passed

* The States General of the North and South, of Languedoc and Languedoil, were nearly always held separately.

† The imposition of this tax, which pressed so hardly on the poor, had given point to Edward's gibe that Philippe was the inventor of the *Salic* Law.

through France, stark naked, lashing themselves with scourges studded with nails, and singing hymns :

“Battons nos charognes bien fort
En remembrant la grant misère
De Dieu, et sa piteuse misère. . . .”

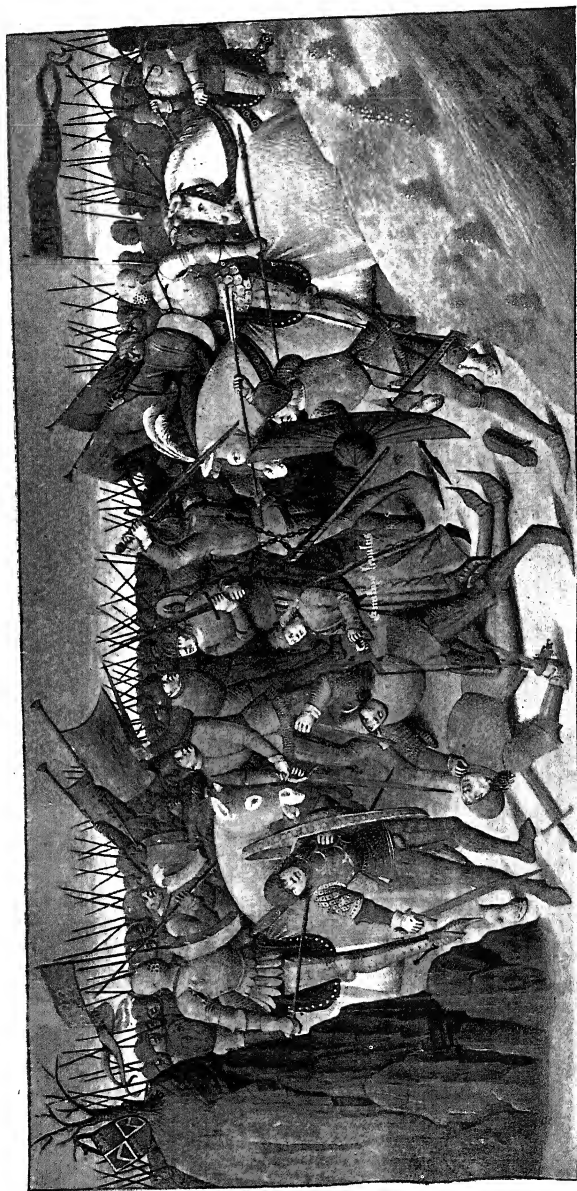
I suppose the idea of propitiating a deity who had chastised the world so cruelly was the origin of this curious mania, and was afterwards merged in other emotions.

Similar outbursts, arising from the horrors of war, pestilence, and famine, gave rise in the fourteenth century to the hysterical convulsions of the St. Vitus' dance, and in the beginning of the fifteenth to the morbid gaiety of the *danse macabre*, the dance of the dead, a savage orgy of the cemeteries, when the living made merry in the homes of the dead.

Philippe de Valois died August, 1350, leaving a kingdom thus afflicted to his son, Jean le Bon (John the Good-natured).^{*} But he had added to the royal domain Montpellier, which the King of Majorca was obliged to sell to him (1349), and, also by purchase and in the same year, the province of Dauphiné, which extended the possessions of France westwards to the Alps. The family of Humbert, Count of Vienne, who sold it, bore a dolphin on their coat of arms. He made it a condition of purchase that the eldest son of the King of France should be henceforth styled the “Dauphin.”

Charles the Bad (le Mauvais), King of Navarre, had inherited several fiefs in Normandy. His ambitious designs and treasonable negotiations with the English coincided with the failure of the Papal Court to negotiate a final peace between France and England (1354-55).

^{*} Eldest son of Philippe VI. and Jeanne de Bourgogne.



A BATTLE SCENE ABOUT THE PERIOD OF AGINCOURT. Page 102.
From a fifteenth-century manuscript in the Harleian collection in the British Museum.

Jean refused to listen to Edward's demand that his full sovereignty over Guienne and Ponthieu should be recognized. Edward landed at Calais, and in October, 1355, ravaged Artois, but was disappointed of the support of the King of Navarre, thanks to some prudent concessions made by Jean.

As the finances of the kingdom became more and more desperate, the disorder of the country greater, and the need of money more imperative in presence of the pillaging companies of bandits and marauding English who roved the land, the States General raised their head, and began to impose conditions on the absolute monarchy, which by its extravagance and lack of organization had proved itself inadequate to deal with the crisis.

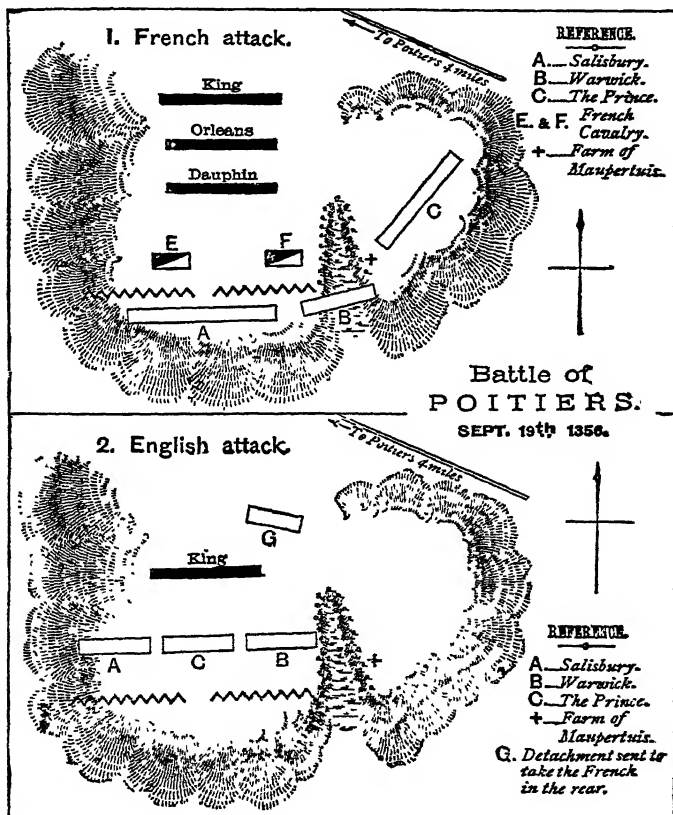
In 1355 the Black Prince had plundered the rich land of Languedoc, and returned from Montpellier and Narbonne with a thousand waggon-loads of booty. It was certain that he would come again in the following year. It was essential to raise funds to resist him. But Jean's finance had been of the most reckless order. Almost his sole resource seems to have been to debase the coinage. This had been done almost monthly since 1350.* That device was now exhausted. The value of the livre tournois had been reduced from 17 francs 37 in 1336 to 1 franc 73. National bankruptcy could go no farther. The States General of Languedoc were summoned to meet at Paris. Promising to re-establish "a strong and durable" coinage, and to forgo the obnoxious "right of seizure," the King asked for aid for the war. The three Orders replied by the mouth of their chosen orators, Étienne Marcel, the Provost of the Paris merchants, speaking for the towns. They granted a subsidy to support 30,000 men. But they imposed conditions. The subsidy was

* Eighty-one Acts for altering the coinage have been counted in the years 1350-1355.

to be raised by a tax on salt and an impost of eight deniers per livre on all sales. These taxes were to be paid by all Frenchmen without distinction of rank or profession. They were to be collected, not by royal tax-gatherers, but by officials appointed by the States General, and applied solely to the purpose for which they were intended. The aid was granted for one year only, at the end of which the States General were to meet again, after an intermediate session to audit the account. They exacted from the King a promise that in future wars levies should not be imposed without first consulting the States General. Such was the first great assault delivered upon the absolutism of the monarchy. The concessions already amounted in principle to a revolution. To vote and to receive taxes is to reign. The success of the States General would have been greater had the taxes thus granted been paid. But it was found difficult to collect them, and riots occurred in Normandy. The obnoxious taxes were withdrawn when the States General met again in March, 1356, and, by way of concession, a new impost on income was granted, so graduated that the richer a man was the less he paid. For, whilst the poor were ground down by overwhelming burdens and restrictions, the nobles and privileged classes regarded the idea of paying taxes at all as an outrageous innovation. The resistance organized by the King of Navarre and Count d'Harcourt was quelled by the arrest of the former and the beheading of the latter at Rouen (April, 1356). King Jean had arrived in Normandy with an army of 50,000 men, the great feudal array of ban and arrière-ban, to repress this revolt, when he was summoned south by the news that the Black Prince had returned to ravage Touraine as he had ravaged Languedoc the year before.

Marching to Poitiers, Jean cut the communications of the English with Bordeaux and the sea. Northwards

they were bound by the Loire. The Black Prince, who had been present as a boy at Crécy, entrenched himself amongst the hedgerows and vineyards on the slopes a few miles south-east of Poitiers. His army was only

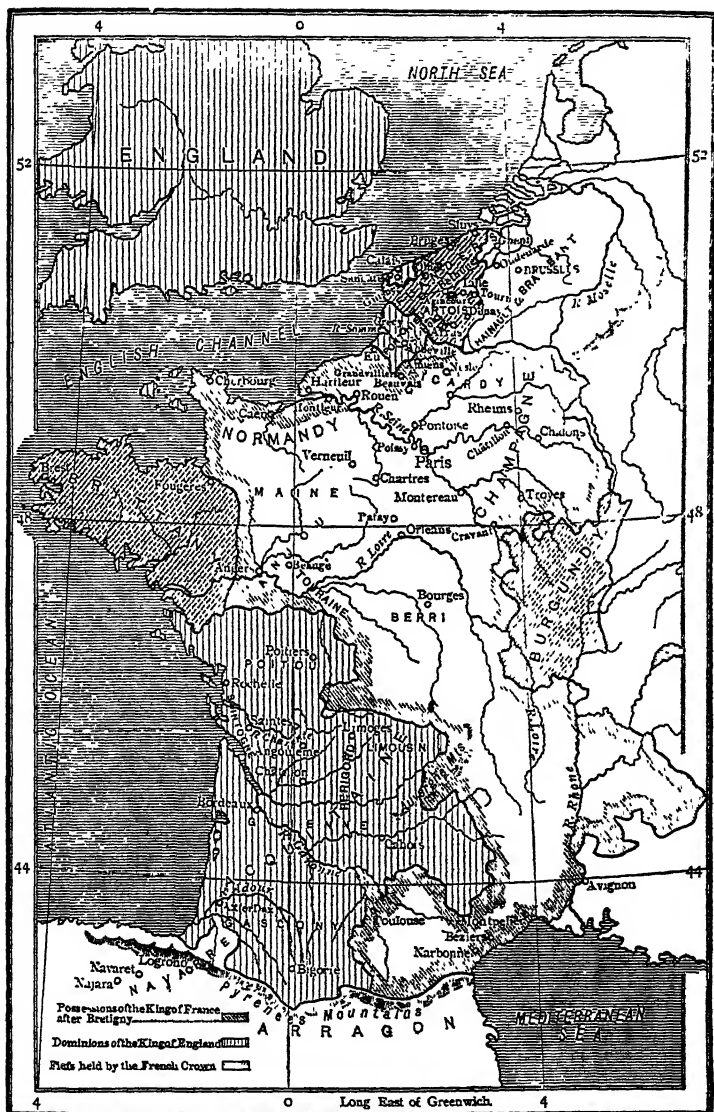


7,000 strong, that of the French many times that number. Jean had but to surround him, and he must have submitted or starved. But such were not the tactics of chivalry. Attributing the disaster of Crécy to the refusal

of their horses to face the English arrows, the French knights advanced on foot. The history of that battle was repeated, save that the slaughter of the French was all the greater. A small company of English detached to take them in the rear completed the disaster. Jean himself, fighting valiantly, was taken prisoner and carried off to England (September 19, 1356). From that moment it was deemed impossible to fight the English archers at all. For four years they marched about the North and West of France, practically unopposed, plundering the country. They were, however, unable to take walled towns or castles. Negotiations for peace were begun by Jean in London in 1359, but the terms were so humiliating that the Dauphin refused to sanction them. Edward therefore began another campaign from Calais in the following year. But the country, once so rich and flourishing, was now an utter desert; he met everywhere with the resistance of despair. The Dauphin had concluded a treaty with the Scots. Peace was signed at length at Brétigny, near Chartres (April, 1360).

Edward waived his claim to the crown of France. The absolute sovereignty of practically all the provinces formerly connected with England were ceded to him—Gascony, Guienne, Poitou, Saintonge, Agenais, Périgord, Limousin, Cahors, Tarbes, the counties of Bigorre and Gaure, Angoumois, Rouergue, Montreuil, Ponthieu, Guines, the seigneurie of Marek, the town and environs of Calais. Jean's ransom was fixed at the enormous sum of 3,000,000 golden crowns. The terms were received with patriotic indignation, and even resistance in some parts, some towns, such as La Rochelle and Abbeville, refusing to give themselves over to the hated English; but on the whole with thankfulness, as a respite from the horrors of the war.

Meantime, at Paris the Dauphin had assumed the



FRANCE IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

regency. He had had to face an opposition, composed of the *bourgeoisie*, who were determined to strike for freedom such as the Flemish towns had obtained. They were led by Étienne Marcel, who found supporters ready to hand amongst the suffering artisans and refugee peasants who crowded to Paris; whilst a third claimant to the crown of France in the captive King of Navarre offered a tempting alliance for the revolutionists. The States General met in October, 1356, and appointed a committee to deliberate on their programme. Few nobles attended. The clergy were led by Robert le Coq, Bishop of Laon, a strong partisan of Navarre; the Third Estate by Marcel.

They demanded the dismissal of the King's evil counsellors—whom they held responsible for the disastrous financial measures of the past and the exactions and malversations of the royal officials—the appointment of a new Council chosen from the States, and the release of the King of Navarre. On these conditions they offered to subsidize an army of 30,000 men for one year. In effect, their demand for the appointment of a permanent Council chosen from their own body amounted to a demand for representative government. The Dauphin to gain time adjourned them, whilst he himself went to seek help from his uncle, the Emperor Charles IV. The States General of Languedoc, meeting at Toulouse, had proved less radical, and voted him supplies for 15,000 men to defend the south. The fact shows how France was still divided into two kingdoms. To raise money the Dauphin had recourse to the old bad plan of debasing the coinage (December, 1356). But when he returned from Germany, without success, he found Paris in a fever of indignation. Marcel had insisted that the order for the new coinage should not take effect. The Dauphin was obliged to summon the States General anew, and to yield to their repeated demands. He signed the

Great Edict of March, 1357. The sixty-one articles of this famous charter, the *Grande Ordonnance*, repeat the concessions already made, tending towards the redress of the intolerable evils in financial and judicial administration. But only a partial renewal of the Council was accepted, for which some members were designated by the Estates. In return a subsidy was granted.

But royal letters soon came from Jean to forbid the collection of the new taxes so imposed. This demonstration of the royal authority, combined with the dislike of paying a new imposition, probably accounts for the failure of Marcel's endeavour to obtain for his country a share in its own government. For when the States met again in November, it was evident that he no longer had any strong support in the country, although Paris was with him. In need of an ally, the *bourgeois* party now invited the King of Navarre to Paris. He had escaped from prison, and came to harangue the multitude in the *Pré aux Clercs* upon his wrongs and the evils of the Regent's government (November 29, 1357). A few weeks later the Dauphin himself addressed the crowd, throwing the blame on the States General.

A new alteration of the coinage was decreed (January, 1358). It was evidently war to the knife. The danger of his position compelled Marcel to violence. He armed his *bourgeoisie*, giving them as a rallying sign caps of red and blue. They marched to the palace, and there slew the Marshals of Champagne and Normandy in the presence of the Dauphin. For a moment he was obliged to yield to force, and to sanction "the will of the people," and to receive, if not to wear, the cap of red and blue which Marcel sent him (February 22, 1358). Then, quitting Paris, he summoned the States General to meet at Compiègne, and rallied the nobles round him.

Amongst the measures passed at Compiègne was one

obliging the Seigneurs to put their castles in order. It was a decree which gave excuse for yet further exactions in money and labour from the unhappy peasantry, and roused the flames of the long-smouldering hatred with which they regarded the nobility.

Since the catastrophe of Poitiers, the routed soldiery and unpaid mercenaries, joined by a crowd of adventurers, had resolved themselves into companies of marauders, who scoured and scourged the land. Roving bands of brigands, English, Gascons, Spaniards, Navarrese, Bretons, roamed through the land, living on it and pillaging the peasants. For these, the churches or the caves in the rocks were the only refuge. So far from fulfilling their feudal duty of protecting them, the nobles too often joined the bands of brigands who preyed on them. To the intolerable burdens of war and pillage were added the taxes wrung from them in order to pay the ransoms of those knights whose failure, and rumoured cowardice, at Crécy and Poitiers, had roused their contempt, and whose luxury and indifference only increased. For Jacques Bonhomme* nothing remained of feudal institutions except the oppression. Maddened by hunger, and incited perhaps by the example of the Parisian *bourgeoisie*, the Jacques of the country round about Beauvais burst into sudden, fierce revolt in May, 1358. They grouped themselves under a captain, William Karl, and singing,

“Cessez, cessez, gens d’armes et piétons,
De piller et manger . . . Jacques Bonhomme,”

they marched into Picardy and Champagne, like a pack of wolves, burning the castles of the nobles, plundering, and in some cases slaying their hated masters and outraging their wives. Their hundreds swelled to thousands

* The common nickname of the French peasantry.

before the King of Navarre, the Dauphin, and the nobles, joining in the task of mutual preservation, turned upon them and slew them like mad dogs. The insurrection of the Jacques was drowned in a river of blood.

The country in no way approved of the extreme measures taken by the commune of Paris. The prestige of royalty proved too great for Marcel. He was driven to open rebellion. He fortified Paris. A reign of terror was inaugurated. Marcel, in desperation, sought the aid of the wandering bands of English freebooters, of Charles of Navarre, of the Flemings; he even negotiated with the Jacques. Each step strengthened the royalist party within the city. On the night of July 31, as he was making a round of the gates, he was struck down at the Porte St. Denis by an Alderman, Jean Maillart, who said that Marcel was about to betray the city and the crown of France to the King of Navarre. Whatever the truth, his last desperate manœuvres need not blind us to the greatness of this citizen-statesman. He had endeavoured to lead his countrymen, like another Arterveldt, to that share in their own government which is the foundation of a free State. If he failed to obtain for them the establishment of those principles of equality and representation which another and a bloodier revolution was to obtain so many hundred years later, it was not because he was not just and wise and true, but because he lacked the support of the opinion of his countrymen.

King Jean's return to France was signalized by an increase of taxation and a renewal of the grievous *gabelle*. He spent his time in foolish and frivolous journeys and gaieties and feastings, partly with the Pope at Avignon, who had almost persuaded him to depart upon a Crusade, and thus draw off from France the scourge of the Great Companies, who showed as little respect for Pope as for

King, when the news that his son* had escaped from the English, by whom he was held hostage for his father's unpaid ransom, determined Jean to return to England in his place. It was an act of kingly honour, though perhaps it was no great hardship to escape from the distress and embarrassment of France to the feastings and fêtes in London, of which Jean died in the following winter.

* The Duke of Burgundy having died without heir in 1361, Jean, claiming to be nearer of kin than Charles of Navarre, assigned the duchy to his youngest son, Philippe, thus founding the great house which, reigning from the Scheldt to the Alps, was presently to endanger the monarchy itself.

XI

THE VALOIS KINGS AND THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (*Continued*)—CHARLES V. (LE SAGE), CHARLES VI. AND CHARLES VII.

A.D. 1364—1461

CHARLES V., the Wise, had need of all his wisdom when he succeeded his father in 1364. Socially and economically the country was in a state of anarchy. The effects of the Black Death and a series of bad harvests were added to the economical disasters of the war and the system of taxation described above. Whilst the nobles lived like bandits on the land, the discontent of the people was indicated, on the one hand, by Marcel's attempt to secure representative government, on the other by the mad rage of the Jacquerie. Could the weakly youth now called to the throne deal with such an accumulation of difficulties, with little to help him, save an empty treasury and rebellious vassals? The immense cleverness with which he had dealt with the States General in the preceding years augured well for the answer of that question. And he was, indeed, to prove that a cool head in the council-chamber, an understanding sympathy with the needs of his people, and economical administration were worth more to his country, and were more truly kingly, than the blundering courage and frivolous chivalry of his profuse and foolish father. Frugal in his personal habits, but displaying a regal splendour in public, a kindly scholar

and a devout gentleman, Charles moderated the excesses of the Inquisition, whilst he modelled himself on St. Louis; but his delight in subtle and tortuous diplomacy is in itself enough to prove that he lacked the simplicity and straightforwardness of his great example.

Intellectually alert, he summoned to his councils thinkers and writers of the day, and deliberately tried to arrive at the principles of good government and to govern in accordance with them. M. Coville* remarks that in the series of ordinances dealing with procedure, taxation, the administration of justice, police, and the army, which helped to earn Charles his title of the Wise, the influence of such writers as Raoul de Presles, Philippe de Mézières, and Nicholas Oresmes may clearly be traced. Their ideas, again, were mainly drawn from the *Politics* of Aristotle; they extolled a limited monarchy acting according to law, and execrated tyranny. It is one more instance of the influence of writers upon history.

There was a natural reaction in favour of royalty. After the excesses and failure of the States General and the peasant revolt, the need of a strong centralized power was patent. The nobles rallied round the King, and the royal ordinances, which introduced little innovation but a sounder organization, were obeyed because they were justly enforced. So the prestige of the crown was retrieved. If Charles were obliged to avail himself of forced loans to pay Du Guesclin's soldiers, he saw to it that those loans were honourably repaid.

After the failure of the frontal attacks of French chivalry, a new class of professional soldiers had sprung up. Bands of "Free Companies," led by men who had become aware of the advantages of strategy and tactics in war, were roving through the country, and proving their superiority to the knights who had claimed the

* Ap. Lavissee, IV. i. 192.

monopoly of prowess in war. Out of these soldiers of fortune Charles began to form a regular, mercenary, standing, royal army. At the same time he saw to the repairing of the fortresses, and organized his fleet under Jean de Vienne, an Admiral worthy to co-operate with Du Guesclin.

In the first year of his reign, victories gained by those soldiers of fortune, Du Guesclin the Breton, and Boucicault, had settled the claims of the King of Navarre* and the war in Brittany.† Charles V. had the good sense to reward Du Guesclin liberally, and presently to find occupation for his free-lances in Spain. Thirty thousand men marched with him to the south, exacting absolution and 200,000 crowns from the Pope on their way, relieving France of their presence, and earning for Charles the alliance of the Spaniards and the aid of their fleet against England‡ (1369). For in that year the Hundred Years' War entered on a new stage. The genius of Du Guesclin, backed by the prudence of Charles, drove the English out of France. In that year Charles felt himself strong enough to break the Peace of Brétigny. The States backed him loyally. Taxes were voted and forces raised. Du Guesclin was appointed Constable of France, and entrusted with the task of expelling the English. Briefly, the tactics which he adopted in the long struggle, were to refuse to give battle, but to harass the enemy with his cavalry, and by sallies from fortified towns and castles. Realizing that it was fatal to attack the English archers from the front, he utilized the superior numbers

* Charles the Bad had rebelled upon the occasion of Jean's disposal of the duchy of Burgundy, which he claimed through his wife, daughter of Marguerite of Burgundy, Queen of Louis Hutin.

† Battle of Cocherel, May, and Aurai, September, 1364.

‡ In 1372 the combined fleets defeated Lord Pembroke off La Rochelle.

and cavalry of the French, by circling round the enemy on their march with innumerable small divisions. He was aided in this guerrilla warfare by the villagers, whom Charles had ordered to be armed and trained to the use of the bow. Supplies were cut off from the coast; the English were compelled to move from place to place, and whilst on the march were obliged to give many opportunities to the French cavalry to attack them from the rear. In hand-to-hand combat their superiority was gone, nor could they force a pitched battle. By degrees they were edged out of France or shut up in the coast towns. After a truce in 1388, there was little more fighting till 1394, when the English surrendered practically everything except Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne.

Worn out by toil and physical suffering, Charles died at the early age of forty-three, within a few weeks of his great captain, Du Guesclin (1380). Neither, therefore, lived to see their struggle crowned with success.

Charles VI. was only twelve years of age. His coming of age had been fixed by his father at fourteen. The regency was divided between his uncles, the Dukes of Anjou, Burgundy, and Bourbon.* Between them and the Duke of Berry a scramble for place, power and money at once began, which resulted in a feudal reaction, but not before an attempt to assert the liberty of the people had been made and crushed.

For an echo of the Wat Tyler Rebellion was heard throughout France in 1382, from Rouen and Rheims to Carcassonne. It was mainly a rising against taxes and tax-gatherers. In Paris a riot was provoked when a tax-gatherer demanded payment on a piece of cress sold by an old woman. Arming themselves with mallets, the *Maillotins* broke open the prisons and demanded the

* Anjou was chiefly concerned with the kingdom of Naples, Burgundy with the fief of Flanders, when he inherited it in 1384

abolition of the hearth taxes (*fouages*), *gabelles*, and tax on sales. A return to the financial régime of Louis IX. was demanded, and promised by the King. But the Dukes regarded the riot as a threatened revolt of the democracy in imitation of the rising against the nobles in Flanders, where Ghent, under Philip van Artevelde, led the way. In answer to an appeal from the Count of Flanders, they crushed the Flemish communes at Roosebeke (1382), and then, returning to Paris victorious, disarmed the threatening multitude of mallet-men. Here and elsewhere the badly organized rebels were first crushed by the feudal coalitions, then ruthlessly executed or fined. All the old taxes were renewed, and the proceeds went to enrich the conquerors, not the treasury.

An end might have been put to the misgovernment of the Dukes, when Charles VI. assumed the reins of government in 1388. He restored the councillors of his father, the *Marmousets*, as they were called, who were chiefly drawn from the lesser nobility and *bourgeoisie*. But four years later the King was struck down with intermittent insanity, the effect of prolonged dissipation, and the unceasing gaieties of his Court, upon weak nerves. The blow fell upon him as he was setting out to avenge the attempted assassination of his Constable, Olivier de Clisson, leader of the Marmousets, by one of the party of nobles (1392). Then the uncles of the King, returning to power, took vengeance on the Marmousets. It was they who signed a twenty-eight years' truce with England (Treaty of Guines, 1395), giving to Richard II. Isabella, daughter of Charles VI., in marriage.

The Duke of Burgundy, Philippe le Hardi, retained the sovereign power until he died in 1404. He was succeeded by his son, John the Fearless (Jean sans Peur), who, as Count of Nevers, had led a Crusade in 1396 against the Turks, who were threatening Hungary. That expedition,

undertaken and conducted as though it were one of those pleasure trips, accompanied by "jousts and balls and incomparable fêtes," which King Jean and Charles VI delighted to make through France, had ended in utter disaster at the hands of the Sultan Bajazet.

Charles VI. had married Isabella of Bavaria, a beautiful fifteen-year-old bride (1385). Following the example of her husband and of his corrupt and frivolous Court, she sank into a career of debauchery. The mad King's brother, Duke of Orleans, was her lover, and through her and the Dauphin, a lad fast falling into the vicious ways of his parents, now held the reins of power. He had no intention of handing them over to the Duke of Burgundy's successor. John the Fearless arrived in Paris with a whole army of Burgundian retainers; he won the hearts of the Parisians by posing as a reformer and denouncing the luxury, extravagance, and exactions of the Orleans party. The Duke surrounding himself with his vassals, it seemed as if civil war must break out within the capital itself. A reconciliation was at length brought about through the intervention of the aged Duke of Berry. A few days later (November 23, 1407) the Duke of Orleans was foully murdered. The Duke of Burgundy fled to his possessions in Flanders, and there proclaimed and justified his guilt. He had, he said, rid the world of a tyrant. Having crushed a rebellion of the Liégeois, he returned victorious to Paris, and exacted from Charles a letter of forgiveness for his brother's murder (March, 1409).

John the Fearless gained the support both of the University and of the people. The University could not forgive the Duke of Orleans for his opposition to its policy with the Pope at Avignon,* whilst John's policy of oppo-

* At this period, during the Great Schism of the West, it was the Armagnac party which identified itself with the "Gallican" policy, maintaining the freedom of the French Church from Papal taxation.



Aug. Rischguts.

CHARLES VII. (1422-1461). Page 164.

From the painting by Jean Fouquet in the Louvre.

sing the increased taxation, which, on the pretext of war with England, had been appropriated by the Duke of Orleans, secured him the friendship of the people. They looked to him to restore the government of the Three Estates, and to relieve the poor of the *gabelles* and all impositions. Against a noble who thus pandered to the people of the market-place, feudalism gathered beneath the banner of the Count d'Armagnac, the father-in-law of one of the sons of Orleans. It was civil war at last (1411). The whole country took sides. In the south and west the white scarf of the Armagnacs prevailed; in the north and east the green caps and white cross of St. Andrew, worn by the Burgundians, were victorious. A period of disorganized pillage and bloodshed ensued, during which both sides sought the aid of the English. At first the Duke of Burgundy, allying himself with the populace and the powerful corporation of butchers, held Paris.

Mob violence, under the leadership of a slaughterer named Caboché, broke out into the wildest excesses. A reaction ensued. The Armagnacs gained the upper hand, and put an end to the mob rule. John the Fearless fled to Flanders. Charles VI. conducted a campaign against him, and a truce was made between the two parties, known as the Treaty of Arras (September, 1414). The success of the Armagnacs in Paris meant the revocation of what is wrongly called the "Ordonnance Cabochienne." This was an ordinance obtained from the King by the *bourgeoisie* and the moderate men of the royal and Burgundian party (May 26, 1413). It provided for a thorough administrative reform, through deliberative councils which should elect all officials. There was nothing revolutionary or democratic about this important charter. It was too wise and moderate to suit the views either of the wild butchers or the reactionary Armagnacs.

Thus, in a lucid moment, the King had at length established some kind of order in a land so torn by factions, when Henry V. landed at Harfleur (August, 1415).

The success of the Armagnacs in the previous year had led John the Fearless to negotiate with the English King. Henry was fascinated by the idea of obtaining the French crown. Besides, a successful foreign war would strengthen the weak position of the King in England. He seized the favourable moment of French faction, and in 1414 demanded of Charles the restoration of the kingdom of France, and the hand of his daughter Catherine. It was merely an excuse for war.

The campaign that followed was an almost exact repetition of that of Crécy. The lessons learned then seem to have been wholly forgotten by the new French nobility. After losing half his army in the siege of Harfleur, Henry marched across country to Calais with the remainder, some 15,000 men. The French army, at least three times as large, awaited him near Agincourt, encamped on a plain newly ploughed and sodden with rain (October 25, 1415). The heavy soil rendered the French cavalry, overweighted with a prodigious mass of armour, more than ever powerless in the presence of the English archers. They were shot down as they endeavoured to charge, and when night fell 10,000 French gentlemen lay dead upon the field. The English lost but a few hundred. But in a moment of alarm during the battle, when it was reported that a French corps was attacking his rear, Henry ordered the French prisoners to be killed, so that his men might be left free to fight. He seems to have stopped the slaughter when the alarm proved false. But he had earned the title of the Butcher of Agincourt.

He returned with a large army to complete his conquest in August, 1417. The Armagnacs still held Paris with an iron grip. But in May, 1418, the gates were treacherously opened to John and his army of Burgundians. Yet again the streets ran with blood, as his supporters, the butchers and flayers, under the leadership of the hangman Capeluche, wrought their murderous will on men and women alike. And meanwhile Henry V. was making good his hold on Normandy. By July it only remained to reduce the great city of Rouen. For six months the place held out. John the Fearless, true to his agreement with Henry, would not raise a finger to relieve it. On January 19, 1419, it fell, and Henry was master of all Normandy. In two short years he had undone the whole work of Philippe Auguste. Then the English advanced slowly up the Seine, intending to starve Paris by blocking the river. The Dauphin, a lad of sixteen, placing himself at the head of the Armagnacs, had retired to the south. In this crisis the Duke of Burgundy, whose anglicizing policy was making his position untenable, was induced to meet the Dauphin on the Bridge of Montereau, with a view to a reconciliation. There he was treacherously murdered (September, 1419). A hundred years later, a monk, showing his skull to François I., remarked that the hole in it was the door by which the English entered France. In verity, the immediate result of the murder was that, in their indignation, John's son, Philippe the Good, and his party openly joined the English. In May, 1420, Charles VI. was made to sign the Treaty of Troyes, by which he recognized Henry V. as his son and heir in place of the "soi-disant Dauphin,* guilty of horrible and enormous crimes." Henry was to retain Normandy and his other

* Thus his father and mother were ready to hint at his illegitimacy. He was said to be the child of Orleans.

conquests as a sort of appanage, and to rule the State in conjunction with Philip of Burgundy until he or his heir should succeed Charles. France had become an annex of England. Exhausted by anarchy and starvation, Burgundian Paris, the University, and the States General forgot their patriotism, and accepted the humiliation, for at least it brought them good government in place of anarchy. But the Dauphin refused to recognize the treaty which deprived him of his inheritance. The Armagnacs became the French party. Languedoc sided with the Dauphin, and he remained master of the kingdom south of the Loire. But, feeble, indolent, and luxurious, he could make no way against the English soldier-King. When Henry died (August, 1422), he left an infant heir ten months old, the fruit of his union with Catherine of France, whom he had married at the time of the Treaty of Troyes. Two months later Charles VI. followed his son-in-law into the grave. The infant, Henry VI., was acclaimed in Paris as King of France and England.

France was now ruled by the English Regent, the Duke of Bedford. Charles VII., "the King of Bourges," as he was contemptuously called, held sway, indeed, in Languedoc, Touraine, Poitou, Orléanais, Berry, Bourbonnais, Auvergne, Lyonnais, and Dauphiné.

But this weak, cowardly son of a madman and a debauched woman was the chief weakness of his party. Nineteen years old when he succeeded his father, his spirit was not equal to the burden of war and struggle which was set upon his feeble shoulders. Without resources, and yet extravagant, he was the last man to organize a campaign of resistance against odds. The Battles of Cravant (1423) and of Verneuil (1424), where the Scots and Gascons he had called to his aid were severely defeated, soon proved his weakness. His diplo-

macy promised to be more successful, when Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, the Regent of England, gave offence to Philip of Burgundy by marrying Jacqueline, Countess of Holland, Hainault, and the neighbouring provinces, and thus becoming master of a district which it was most important for Philippe, as Duke of Burgundy, to control. It was only by great concessions of territory to him in the north by Bedford, and by Gloucester's desertion of his wife, that the Duke of Burgundy was prevented from abandoning the English cause.

In view of the feebleness of Charles' resistance, the English in 1427 began to press upon his frontier, the Loire. A reverse at Montargis, where the Bastard of Orleans and La Hire* scored a brilliant success, did not prevent them undertaking the siege of Orleans in the following year.

If Orleans, the key to Berry, Bourbonnais, and Poitou, were captured, the Dauphin's sway would be confined to Languedoc and Dauphiné. In October, 1428, therefore, the Duke of Bedford decided to lay vigorous siege to that city.

The resistance was conducted with great determination, the French artillery proving very effective, until February, when the failure of a reinforcement under the Count of Clermont, aided by the dashing soldier La Hire, to capture an English convoy from Paris—a failure ending a rout—utterly disheartened the besieged. The convoy was commanded by Sir John Falstaff, one of the two English members of the Regent's Great Council

* Étienne de Vignolles, nicknamed La Hire, is the popular type of the brigand hero, whose prowess and that of his comrades served Charles in lieu of an army. After the disaster of Agincourt and that of Verneuil, hardly less terrible, the French had to learn again the lesson which Du Guesclin had taught them. The tactics of chivalry had once more to be discarded, and the less heroic, but more profitable, process of guerrilla warfare led to the same desired result.

at Paris.* It consisted partly of 300 waggon-loads of herrings for the besieging army, and this fact gained for the engagement the title of the Battle of the Herrings from the ironical Orléanais.

This reverse broke the spirit of the besieged. The leaders and Bishops deserted the sinking ship. The Orléanais, in despair, offered themselves to the Duke of Burgundy. But Bedford told him that he had not beaten the bushes in order that others might get the birds. Charles remained helpless and inert. There was no one to unite the forces of French patriotism and lead them to any successful effort of resistance. Orleans seemed certain to fall, when suddenly a leader and a saviour appeared.

Joan of Arc† was the daughter of a farmer, born about 1412 at Domrémy. Exceedingly devout, the stories of St. Catherine, St. Margaret, and St. Michael inspired her. The miseries of her unhappy country burned into her soul, and in a series of visions the little village girl seemed to see her favourite saints appear and bid her lead the armies of France to victory. The peril of Orleans decided her. All France was waiting, in helpless sympathy, for the fall of that gallant city. From the Marches of Lorraine, Jeannette made her way to Chinon, and obtained the King's consent to lead an army to the deliverance of Orleans. There had been some demur at first. Perhaps she was an emissary of the devil? The fact of her virginity was ascertained, and settled the question in her favour. Charles gave her

* Whilst governing the country through French civilians, and in accordance with French customs and traditions, the English in Normandy held all the chief military posts. The Duke of Bedford's administration was marked by great moderation and justice; he was endeavouring to reconcile the country to English rule, and to found a Lancastrian dynasty in France. But the resistance of the patriotic party completed the devastation which the civil war and Henry's campaigns had begun.

† Jeanne d'Arc, or Darc.

a suit of armour. The rough Breton and Gascon soldiers, the rude captains, like La Hire, the Armagnac nobles, all flocked to her standard, their patriotism stirred by her enthusiasm, their efforts united, directed, and inspired by the Heaven-sent maid, Jehanne la Pucelle. The undisciplined bands of Armagnac brigands became docile Christians, fighting as it were in a holy war, obedient to the authority of the peasant girl.*

The writings of such patriotic poets as Robert Blondel, Olivier Basselin, and Alain Chartier, and the pamphlets of Jouvenel des Ursins, show how strong was the latent feeling of nationality, which the domination of Burgundians and English had only served to develop and strengthen. The cynicism, licence, and brutality of this age of war and misery are depicted in the wonderful lyrics of the thief, murderer, Bohemian, poet, François Villon.

All, then, that France had needed was for patriotism, already awakened, to be concentrated on some issue and under one banner. The authority which the King could not wield was exercised for him by the girl who believed that he held the throne of France as the Vicar of God. She led her soldiers to victory. She was wounded, but her courage never failed her, her conviction never wavered. Orleans was relieved (May 8, 1429). The effect upon France was to rouse the whole spirit of the nation. The English, paralyzed by superstition, lost place after place, and on June 18 suffered a severe defeat at Patay from the army led by the Maid, whom they regarded as a disciple of the devil.

Joan of Arc was now intent on executing the second part of her mission. Her "voices" had bidden her to assure the King that he was the true heir of France, and

* So complete was the reformation that swearing was forbidden—a deprivation beyond the strength of the valorous La Hire, who received a dispensation from the Maid. He was allowed to swear by his staff.

to persuade him to be anointed and crowned at Rheims. Before his people could be united in a whole-hearted effort to expel the English, it was necessary that the doubt publicly cast upon the legitimacy of Charles by the Treaty of Troyes should be removed, and that his kingship should be proclaimed by the solemn sanction of the Church through the traditional ceremony at Rheims. Henry VI. had not been so anointed. With that swift common sense and simple concentration upon the main issue which distinguished every action of this wonderful peasant girl, and which in controversy enabled her to silence every theological casuist who tried to trip her, whether at Charles' Court or in the dungeons at Rouen, she pressed forward now to the achievement of that function which should give to the people a true anointed King, on whom to focus their national sentiment in opposition to the alien domination. The patriotism of Joan of Arc was bound up with devotion to the King. It was, indeed, only the monarchy which, by recovering its prestige, could rescue the unhappy country from the state of anarchy and misery into which it had fallen. Borne upon a tide of popular enthusiasm, which swept all resistance from its path, led by the Maid, the indolent King suffered himself to be carried to Rheims, and was there consecrated (July 17, 1429). It remained to take the capital. In spite of Charles' vacillation, Joan of Arc induced him to make the attempt. On September 8 an assault was delivered on the walls of Paris. The Maid was wounded before the Porte Saint-Honoré. Charles at once stopped the attack and made a truce with the Duke of Burgundy. From the beginning, part of his entourage had been jealous of the Maid's prestige.

She was now given a small military command, and presently fell a victim to her own bravery. Captured by the Anglo-Burgundians in a sally from Compiègne,

which she was defending (May, 1430), she was taken to Rouen. There, after a most iniquitous trial, conducted by the Bishop of Beauvais, in which she showed extreme fortitude and all the ability of straightforward innocence in defending herself and the King she served, she was condemned for a relapsed heretic, an idolatress and apostate. On May 30, 1431, the Maid was burned at the stake, as pure a saint and as noble a martyr as history can show, dying as she had lived, for her ideal of God, and King, and country.

Her King had never moved a finger to save her, though he held the English champion a prisoner, Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, captured at Patay, upon whom he might have threatened to take reprisal. Not a single Frenchman, soldier, statesman, or ecclesiastic, raised his voice on her behalf.

The news of her death was received with indifference at the French Court, and roused no outburst of indignation among the people. It was not till a quarter of a century afterwards that, upon the request of Charles VII., the Pope revised her trial, and the rehabilitation of the Maid of Orleans was solemnly proclaimed (July 7, 1456).

The English had satisfied their thirst for vengeance. They had removed from their path the witch who, according to the crude superstition of the age, had paralyzed their arms. But with her removal success did not return. In vain was young Henry crowned King of France in Burgundian Paris.

Gradually, very gradually, during fifteen years of anarchy and pillage, the inevitable happened. The small invading nation was edged out of France. A strong and capable King, rousing the national sentiment, and gathering round him the natural defenders of the land, as Joan of Arc had done, might easily have achieved his result long before. As it was, the weakening of the

English, owing to domestic troubles and the secession of the Duke of Burgundy (Treaty of Arras, 1435), dearly bought by concessions from the King, and partly induced by the threatening attitude of the Emperor Sigismund, who had entered into alliance with Charles, produced the desired end. The final blow was struck when the English, making a last effort to retrieve a long series of disasters, were defeated at Castillon, chiefly by the French free-archers and peasant infantry, and Charles VII. entered Bordeaux in triumph (October 19, 1453). The Hundred Years' War was at an end. The English "wolves" had been chased from the good land of France,* and retained only Calais and a couple of small towns in that neighbourhood.

With the coming of peace a change came over the whole government of the country. Slowly, very slowly, order was re-established, and France, which had been rendered a desert, recovered her prosperity. And with this change the prestige of the Crown grew daily. Charles is entitled to little of the praise with which he is usually accredited for the reforming zeal displayed during the latter part of his reign. He is supposed to have acquired not only wisdom, but energy, with years. In fact, the slothful debauchee was wholly given up to wine and women. But he was truly named "the well served" (*le bien servi*). He was surrounded by capable advisers, like the Constable, Count of Richemont, as wise a counsellor as he was a brave soldier, and by others, like Jacques Cœur, the merchant-prince, drawn from the *bourgeoisie* and *petite noblesse*. A small reforming council of this kind, strongly opposed to the *haute noblesse*, directed the affairs of the kingdom, and laboured to restore the work of Charles V. The King did what they told him. He was guided in

* "Escachiet les leux,
Hors du boin pais franchois."

Ballad of 1436.

this course, which was both wise and easy, by his mother-in-law, Yolande of Anjou, a woman of masculine intelligence, who knew how to influence him by means of others, whether through a saint, like Joan of Arc, or a mistress, like Agnes Sorel. For from this time dates the period when the King's favourites, publicly acknowledged and rewarded, swayed the fate of France.

The first step was to return to the task of organizing a regular army. It was necessary to suppress the *écorceurs* and *routiers*, the bands of undisciplined mercenary soldiers on whom, since the breakdown of feudalism, the King had hitherto had to rely. Just before the truce of 1444, which was the beginning of the end of the war, Charles summoned the States General at Orleans. They voted a subsidy, and a decree was issued (November, 1439) which repeated the provisions of 1374 for providing a regular body of *gendarmerie* under the immediate authority of the King. It was a blow at the power of the feudal lords, and provoked a rebellion amongst the *écorceurs*, whose occupation of licensed brigandage was thus threatened. But the *bourgeoisie* and the people were on the side of law and order, and the execution of a dozen captains of those free companies soon crushed the *Praguerie*—for so the rebellion was called, in allusion to the Hussite revolt at Prague. By a decree of 1445, disciplined companies of regular cavalry, recruited from the old *routiers*, were established, to be quartered in certain towns, and commanded by captains nominated by the Crown. A permanent land-tax—the *taille des gens de guerre*—was imposed for their support.* For infantry, by decrees of 1448 and 1451, besides the town militias and trained bands of archers and cross-

* The records of the States General are very incomplete; but it appears that this was the last time they were summoned by Charles. Thereafter the land-tax was annually reimposed by the King in Council without them.

bowmen formed for the defence of the towns, it was ordained that each parish, or group of fifty hearths, should provide an archer to be always ready for the King's service (*francs-archers*). This new organization, incomplete as it was, sufficed to put an end to the terrible military anarchy which had devastated and depopulated the country, to recover Normandy and Guienne from the English (1449-1453), and thereafter to provide the King with the nucleus of a standing army, to the great profit both of the country and the monarchy.

The support of the clergy was secured by the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438), which asserted the independence of the Gallican Church, and at the same time reduced to a minimum the rights of the Holy See in the matter of French ecclesiastical benefices. Whilst protecting the French clergy from the intolerable exactions of Rome, the Pragmatic Sanction added to the power and resources of the Crown and the nobles ; for Charles went beyond the decrees of the Council of Bâle, and recognized the right of noble patrons to present to benefices (*cf.* p. 201).

Steps were taken to improve the administration of justice. Nor were the financial reforms inaugurated by the Chancellor Jacques Cœur of less far-reaching importance. Receivers and administrators alike were obliged to return their accounts regularly to the King, and thus a central control and check was established over the peculation of the *gens du roi*. Jacques Cœur himself, however, could not keep his hands clean. He was convicted of embezzlement in 1451. Though undoubtedly guilty, his fall probably indicates a temporary success on the part of the opposition, the nobles with whom the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy had identified themselves. This opposition gave much trouble to the King in the closing years of his reign ; he is said, indeed, to have

starved himself to death for fear of being poisoned by the supporters of the Dauphin.

It is typical of the cosmopolitan character and influence of the Universities of those days that, whilst France was at the lowest ebb of her power, the theologians of the University of Paris were yet able to take the lead in promoting those universal Councils at Pisa, Constance, and Bâle, which, assuming an authority superior to that of the Pope, at length put an end to the scandal of the luxurious Papal Court at Avignon and the amazing interlude of the Great Schism.

The pretensions of the nobility remained unaltered, but during the last half-century a gradual change had come over their personnel. An enormous number of the old nobility had perished in the great battles and plagues of the Hundred Years' War; many, too, had been ruined by the luxury and extravagance which was maintained at their Courts in spite of the penury and devastation of the country. The places of the old feudal Barons and Knights were filled and their numbers increased by the new class of *gentilhomme*, the courtly Seigneur, whose families required to be supported by posts and pensions, and who arrogated to themselves the emoluments and exemptions of the official class. The permanent establishment of the tax upon land, levied only upon the property of the *roturiers* (plebeians), left the clergy and nobility, who were exempt from it, without motive for resisting, through the States General, the increasing power of the Crown. After 1439 they abandoned the championship of the great principles insisted upon by the States General in 1355-56, that no tax should be levied without the assent of that body, and that the three Orders should be subjected to the same taxes. Henceforth it was admitted that the clergy paid with their prayers, the nobility with their swords, and the

people with their money. The Third Estate, thus abandoned by the privileged classes, turned to the King, and supported every attack made by the Crown upon the rights of the clergy and nobility. When those rights were abolished the Crown was absolute, and, being absolute, was left alone to face the people who had made it so. "The defection of the clergy and nobility was the first cause of the establishment of absolute power, and of the Revolution which was accomplished 350 years later."*

* Rambaud, *Hist. de la Civilisation Française*.



ONE OF THE DUNGEONS IN LOUIS XI.'S CASTLE
AT LOCHES,

XII

LOUIS XI.

A.D. 1461—1483

LOUIS XI. was thirty-eight years of age when he came to the throne. Son of the feeble Charles VII., grandson of the madman Charles VI., he was a man of immense ability and restless energy, who spent his life on circuit through his kingdom, with little escort and no display. Ambassadors, who desired an audience, might have to travel all over France to find him, and then be received in a peasant's cottage by a King so shabbily dressed that his horse and clothes together were not worth twenty francs, as the astonished citizens of Abbeville marvelled to observe. For he hated ceremonials, banquets, balls, and preferred the company of the *bourgeoisie*. One of his maxims was that a King must have acquaintance with everything and everybody ; another, that he who does not know how to dissemble does not know how to reign. For himself, he was from first to last enamoured of the task of reigning, an indefatigable worker, who was never weary of studying men and things first-hand, and of using his knowledge and power to devise cunning political combinations to outwit his enemies and increase his might. Never tired of learning, he never forgot what he learned. Curious as a woman, he organized a service of royal posts (1464), in order that he might be kept informed of all events. His statesman-

ship was Machiavellian, and so adept was he in intrigue that the Milanese Ambassador confessed that he might have been an Italian. Crafty and unscrupulous, he had,



as Dauphin, already given proof enough of his insatiable ambition. And he knew how to use his great personal charm and powers of cajolery to ensnare his victim and conceal his designs.



TILE CASTLE OF ANGERS.

Built by Saint-Louis (1220-1270) on the site of the old castle of Foulques Nerra (1040).

By nature cruel and vindictive, talkative and passionate, his self-control was so great that "he seldom sprang on his prey till it was fairly within his grasp, and till all hope of rescue was vain; and his movements were so studiously disguised that his success was generally what first announced to the world the object he had been manœuvring to attain."* He was devout, too, after the curious medieval fashion, eager to have on his side anyone of influence in Paradise, and using his piety to cloak his crimes. Loved by his friends, for he was generous, hated by his enemies, he inspired fear in all—"the most terrible King that ever reigned in France," so a contemporary described him.

When Louis XI. succeeded, he found the bureaucracy which had reconstituted the State more powerful than ever. He himself as Dauphin had suffered prolonged exile, under the protection of the Duke of Burgundy, as the champion of the old feudal nobility. But as King he intended to be ruled neither by the nobility nor by the *bourgeoisie*, but to establish a personal despotism, and to enjoy the absolutism which the latter had helped to restore.

By repealing the Pragmatic Sanction he secured the support of the Pope, but at the expense of the opposition of the partisans of a national Church, of the nobles and Seigneurs who had gained what the Pope had lost, and of all who objected to money going out of the country to replenish the coffers of Rome. The Pope, in gratitude, likened this "Very Christian King" to Constantine and Charlemagne. But Louis soon repented of his bargain. He never formally restored the Pragmatic, but applied or withdrew it, according as he wished to put diplomatic pressure on the Papacy or not.

* Sir Walter Scott, *Quentin Durward*. Our knowledge of Louis XI. is derived from his own letters, despatches of Ambassadors, chroniclers like (the prejudiced) Basin and Molinet, and, above all, from the great historian of his reign, Philippe de Commines, his Minister and passionate admirer.

At his coronation at Rheims the high Barons assembled, expecting a speedy restoration of their feudal privileges. The Duke of Burgundy, their leader, prayed the King to pardon those whom he believed to have been his enemies as Dauphin. The answer of Louis was characteristic. He would pardon them all, except seven, whom he would not name. In fact, more than seven, and amongst them some of the most distinguished advisers of Charles VII., found their way to the dungeons of Loches or the Bastille. Very many of Charles' officials were dismissed, and Louis filled their places by men chosen from every nationality and class, whose zeal and ability he could trust. Chiefly he preferred men of the middle class or of no position at all. But later, recognizing the merits of his father's advisers, he restored most of them. As for the people, who expected a remission of taxation at the coronation, they were chastised with scorpions. The taxes were increased, and when this provoked a riot at Rheims, several of the citizens were docked of an ear. The University of Paris and the Parliaments fared little better, and the clergy were deprived of some of their exemptions. The nobles were equally disappointed ; so far from having their privileges restored, they were even forbidden to hunt without the permission of the King. The chief Houses which Louis had to reduce, in order to complete his task of destroying the political power of a class which was now only a menace to peace and good government, were Anjou, Brittany, and Burgundy. The first included the scattered provinces of Anjou, Provence, Maine, and Lorraine. Even had they been capable of combined resistance, their weak and amiable Prince, the "Good King René," still so dear to the hearts of the Provençals, could never have withstood the political cunning of the King of France.

Louis had begun somewhat recklessly for so astute a man. The discontent to which these various measures gave rise had issue in the War of the Public Weal (1465-1472). A league was formed, headed by the King's brother, Charles of France, and the Duke of Burgundy,* which was joined by Brittany and the holders of such appanages as Bourbon, Alençon, Armagnac, Dunois. In spite of its high-sounding name, the War of the Public Weal was but another, though a more dangerous, *Praguerie*. The weal which this league of nobles sought was that of their own hereditary power. The *bourgeoisie* and the people of the towns and country were not long in doubt when they had to choose between a King who kept discipline in his army, and was clearly endeavouring to re-establish economic order and prosperity in his kingdom, and nobles whose attentions to their weal had hitherto been that of oppressors, and whose league was loosely knit together by the self-interest of each Baron. Success, however, was at first with the feudal coalition. It was only defeated by the steadfast policy of the diplomatic King. The war which was to end with the ruin of the House of Burgundy seemed at one time as if it might enable the son of Philip the Good to found an independent centralized State. The Battle of Montlhéry (July, 1465), without being decisive, compelled Louis to retreat to Paris and sign the Treaty of Conflans in October, by which he conceded all the demands of the confederates, and practically placed himself under their control. His object, doubtless, was to gain time and to break up the league by giving to each important *ligueur* all that he desired, and then to attack each singly. For, two months after he had given his brother the Duchy of Normandy as an appanage by this

* Philip the Good died in 1467. He was succeeded by Charles the Bold (*Le Téméraire*).

treaty, he pounced upon it and took it back. Pitiless as always in his triumphs, he kept his Provost-Marshal, Tristan l'Hermite, busy executing those whom he suspected of having acted against the Crown. His next step was to make an alliance with the Liégeois, and to propose that the King of England should invade Picardy. Both moves involved war with Charles of Burgundy. But it was Charles who gained the alliance of England, as well as of Denmark and Savoy; the Duke of Brittany, in concert with him, invaded Normandy (October, 1467). Louis then summoned the States General, and appealed to his people (February, 1468). They approved of his action in Normandy, declaring that in no case could Normandy be alienated. A royal army invaded Brittany, and forced the Duke, François II., to sign a peace. But Louis did not trust himself to fight Charles the Bold. As leader of the feudal nobility, he had, perhaps, learned the folly of chivalrous glory. At any rate, he certainly shrank from risking on the chance of a battle-field the fruits of all that he hoped to gain by his skill in diplomacy. Instead, he decided upon a daring stroke. He obtained a safe-conduct from the Duke, and went to Péronne to confer with him (October, 1468). Suddenly came the news that Liége had risen at the instigation of Louis' emissaries. Charles was furious, and held the King prisoner. Louis was obliged to sign a new treaty, granting great concessions to the Duke. He swore upon the Holy Cross that he knew nothing of the Liége affair, and consented to undergo the humiliation of marching with Charles to reduce that place. The unhappy inhabitants whom he had encouraged to revolt beheld him, to their dismay, shouting, "Vive Bourgogne!" beneath their walls. Their town was utterly destroyed.

But Louis XI. never swerved from his purpose. Rewarding his foes or those who failed him with the scaffold

or the dungeon,* heaping riches and honours upon those who served him well, whatever their characters, “the universal spider,” as he is termed in the ballads of the day, never ceased to spin the web of his intrigues.

Having thus ignominiously escaped from the clutches of the Duke, Louis set himself with redoubled energy to the task of humbling his enemy. The struggle lasted till 1472, when, after two unsuccessful campaigns, the Duke was obliged to make terms. And then, one after the other, all the old baronial houses were reduced to submission. In vain had they, in order to save themselves from their destroyer, invited Edward IV. to take the Crown of France. He who wore it prevailed upon the English King by gold and compliments to retire. And then once more the executioner and the assassin were busy with the King’s vengeance. The Count of Saint-Pol and the Duke of Nemours were among his victims.

The old King René and his nephew Charles had been persuaded to recognize Louis as heir to Maine, Anjou, and Provence. When Charles the Bold died in 1477 at Nancy, in his disastrous campaign against the Swiss, the question arose as to the succession to his immense domains.

Louis lost no time in annexing the County and Duchy of Burgundy, Picardy, the County of Boulogne, and Artois. He answered the resistance of Arras by wiping it out of existence. He based his claim on the grounds that the fiefs of Charles the Bold lapsed to the Crown in default of a male heir. In reality, they were capable of female holding.† When Mary, Charles’ daughter, and

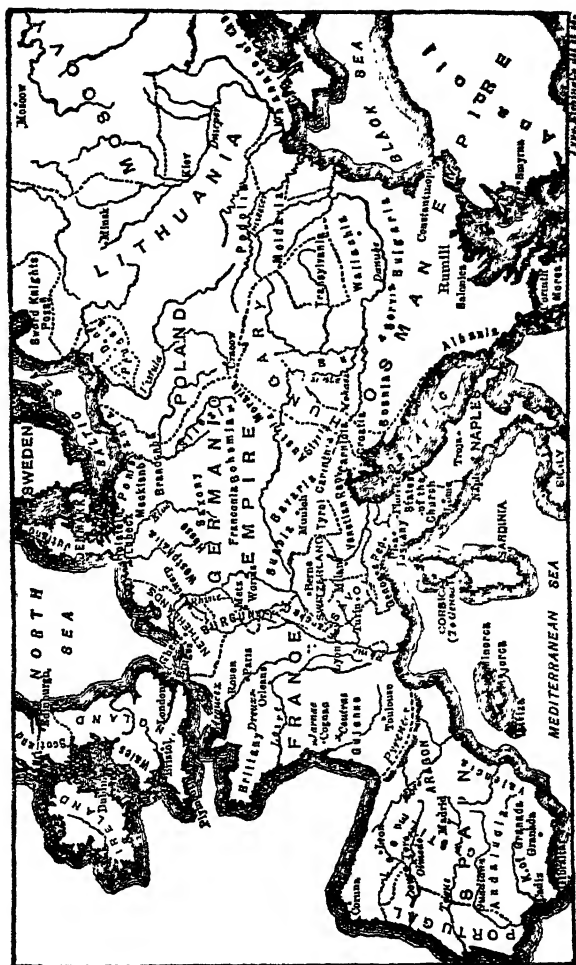
* On returning to Paris, he found that his intimate adviser, Cardinal Balue, was carrying on a treasonable correspondence with Burgundy. He rewarded him with eleven years’ confinement in the Castle of Loches, in an iron cage in which he could not stand upright—a torture invented by the Cardinal himself.

† A. de Ridder, *Les droits de Charles-Quint au Duché de Bourgogne*

heiress of Flanders, Hainault, and the Low Countries, appealed to him as her godfather, Louis announced his intention of marrying her to his son, the Dauphin Charles, a boy of eight. But Mary had been betrothed to Maximilian of Austria, son of the Emperor, and he secured the prize (1477). Louis, coveting Flanders above all things, promptly invaded Hainault. Maximilian, after two campaigns, gained an indecisive victory over the French at Guinegate, before Théroutanne (August, 1479). The death of Mary of Burgundy (1482) led to the Peace of Arras (December). Marguerite, the infant daughter of Maximilian, was betrothed to the Dauphin, and was to bring to him as her dowry the Franche-Comté and Artois. Thus Louis had secured the greater part of the Burgundian inheritance for France. But by throwing Mary into the arms of Maximilian through an error of intrigue, he had introduced the House of Austria into the Low Countries, and brought into existence a new danger to the French monarchy.

The last few years of Louis' life were spent in seclusion at Plessis-les-Tours, where, behind a network of defences, he lived a prey to nervous fear, not unlike some of those Italian despots upon whom he had modelled his conduct. When he died in 1483 he had recovered for the monarchy the position it held under Philippe IV. Brittany alone of the great feudal territories remained independent. In order to accomplish his will, Louis had not only increased the standing army, but added to it large numbers of Swiss and Scotch mercenaries. To pay for this costly army and for the King's political intrigues, the country had been bled white. The *taille* had been continually raised. The *bourgeoisie* was compelled to contribute heavily. But it was upon their steadfast support that Louis relied for his success. He has been called the King of the *petites gens*, but, in fact, he had no sympathy

whatever with democracy. He was rather the King of the *bourgeois*, who knew that in the power of the Crown



EUROPE IN 1470.

was their one protection against the feudal coalitions. In order to keep the good-will of the merchant aristocracies

of the towns, Louis therefore encouraged commerce, not only by organizing and developing the trade corporations for the benefit of the masters rather than of the men, but also by introducing new industries, such as the manufacture of silk. He was liberal enough, too, to encourage the introduction of the new art of printing into France.*

Louis had pursued to the end his ideal of personal government, but he had pursued it as the head of a nation. On this point, at least, he had a conscience. This bad man, as M. Martin puts it, was not a bad Frenchman. His reign, so troublous and oppressive to the people, had accomplished much for the unity of the nation. Besides subordinating the power of great and petty nobles alike, and developing the power of the industrial middle classes, it gave to France Picardy from the sources of the Oise to Burgundy, Provence, Anjou, Maine, Barrois, and Roussillon, Artois, and Franche-Comté. It upheld the power of France to the Pyrenees, the Jura, and the Maritime Alps, and made a long stride towards establishing the natural frontiers of the realm.

Like the Sovereigns of England and Spain, and not at all like the Italian despots he otherwise imitated, Louis directed his individual covetousness towards the aggrandizement of the State, as something greater and more enduring than his own private gains. In this he showed himself a far better Frenchman than the next of his name, who has received much higher praise, much less deserved.

* Charles VII. had sent to Mayence in 1458 to try to learn the secret of the new industry. In 1469 two Professors of the University summoned Ulrich Gering, Michel Friburger, and Martin Kranz to Paris, and installed them with their presses in the buildings of the Sorbonne itself. Books were soon pouring from presses all over France.

XIII

CHARLES VIII. (1483-1498) AND LOUIS XII. (1498-1515)

CHARLES VIII. was but thirteen years of age when Louis died. The decree of Charles V. had fixed fourteen as the age for the majority of the Kings of France. Fortunately for the King, his eldest sister, Anne of Beaujeu, had inherited much of her father's political ability and tenacity of purpose. "She is the least foolish woman in the world," Louis had said, "for there is no such thing as a wise one." Aided by her husband, Pierre de Beaujeu, she managed to stem the tide of reaction which set in with the death of Louis. The Parliament of Paris at once took vengeance upon some of Louis' advisers. But the cleverness of the Beaujeu saved the majority, and the policy they represented, from shipwreck at the hands of the cabal of nobles which was formed to recover the power they had lost. "Madame" at once endeavoured to disarm the malcontents by promises and favours. The natural leader of the opposition was Louis, Duke of Orleans, first Prince of the blood. He was made Governor of the Île de France and Champagne; the Count of Dunois, Governor of Dauphiné. The Duke of Bourbon was appointed Constable of France. Both parties agreed to summon the States General, each hoping to derive paramount authority in the Council from that Assembly.*

* The States met at Tours January 15, 1484. It was decided that the Council should be composed of the Princes of the blood and twelve members selected from the Deputies to the States

The Deputies of the Three Estates were ordered to be elected in common; the electors of each bailiwick, or *sénéchaussée*, were required to send three representatives—one of the Church, one of the nobles, and one of the “common estate.” In some parts—Touraine, for instance—the elections were so made, and in others—for instance, Lyonnais—the more important of the peasantry were consulted. The phrase *Tiers État* appears for the first time in the documents relating to this Assembly, but the Third Estate does not seem to have played a very important part in its proceedings. Thus the change was completed from the old feudal character of the Estates, when the prelates, Barons, and representatives of the *bonnes villes*, were summoned to attend as feudatories of the King; instead, the electors of the administrative divisions now sent their representatives as subjects of the realm. This Assembly of 1484 was really, and for the first time, a States General. All the Provinces except Brittany were represented. “It was a startling manifestation of the unity of France, as the Hundred Years’ War and the royal policy had constituted it.”*

The Estates demanded a reform of abuses. But the Council played upon the jealousy of the Provinces. The Deputies were divided into six nations, who debated in separate chambers. Even so, they insisted upon the diminution of the *taille* and a repartition of the imposts. And they would only grant a subsidy for two years, and that on condition that they were summoned at the end of that time, for henceforth no tax should be levied without their consent. This was accepted, and they

General, in addition to the existing councillors. The Duke of Orleans was appointed President. The importance of this meeting of the States is great, not owing to its measures, but to its constitution.

* Petit-Dutaillis, ap. Lavissee, IV., ii., p. 424.

were abruptly dismissed (March 11). A closer union of purpose on the part of the Three Orders and the Provinces they represented might, no doubt, have resulted upon this occasion in more important progress towards a constitutional government.

As it was, by making a few concessions and some promises, the Beaujeu had stemmed the tide of reaction against the monarchy. The aristocratic agitation of the Duke of Orleans and his friends left the people cold. His struggle with the Beaujeu soon passed beyond the Council-chamber. Once more the country was plunged into civil war—a war of the “Public Weal” ! (1485).

The Duke failed to obtain the support of the towns, but contrived an alliance with the Emperor Maximilian, the King of Navarre, the Dukes of Brittany, Bourbon, and Lorraine, and the Counts of Narbonne, Nevers, Commines, Dunois, Angoulême, Albret, and others. The insurrection which he had fostered was finally quelled by a victory at St. Aubin in Brittany, when La Trémouille defeated the rebels and captured the Duke of Orleans (July, 1488). A few weeks later François II. of Brittany died. The Duchy was in a terrible state of exhaustion, pillaged by Charles’ troops, English troops—for Henry VII., fishing in troubled waters, was hoping to regain Guienne—German troops—for Maximilian, King of the Romans, wished to become Duke of Brittany and recover the heritage of Charles the Bold—and Spanish troops—for Ferdinand wanted Roussillon. A girl of thirteen, lively and charming, was François’ heiress. Maximilian secured the hand of Anne of Brittany, and was married to her by proxy in December, 1490. Charles and his wise councillors, the Beaujeu, at once changed their tactics. Hitherto he had been attempting to reduce Brittany by force, laying claim to it as a male fief. He now besieged Anne in Rennes. She yielded. The

marriage with Maximilian, concluded without the consent of her suzerain, was declared null. On December 6, 1491, Charles VIII. and Anne of Brittany were married, the bride undertaking, if Charles died without issue, not to marry again, unless it were his successor or the nearest heir to the throne.

Brittany was incorporated with France, and thus, after the efforts of three reigns, France had realized her natural desire and become territorially one. But instead of consolidating his kingdom and repulsing the enemies who gathered on his borders, Charles VIII., sighing for new worlds to conquer, plunged at once into war with Italy. He had outgrown his sister's leading-strings, and when she retired from the helm of State, Charles had no one to prevent him from indulging his own romantic desire to conquer an empire. His nobles, inspired, like himself, by notions of an outworn feudalism, encouraged him. There was even talk of a Crusade. If the voice of Madame and of wisdom had been listened to, and expansion were necessary, Charles would have begun in the direction of Flanders and the North. Possibly he feared Maximilian and a war with the Empire. At any rate, he was drawn into the maze of corrupt and petty Italian politics by the invitation of the Italians themselves. Lodovico Sforza (Il Moro) was insecure at Milan. He invited the King of France to come to his aid, promising in return to support him in prosecuting the rights of the Angevins.

And Charles, who had inherited through Charles of Anjou certain claims to the kingdom of Naples,* gladly availed himself of the opportunity. Had not Louis, his

* The claim was based on the conquest of that kingdom by Charles I. of Anjou, brother of St. Louis, passing through Jean le Bon and the second French House of Anjou. The House of Aragon, with claims hardly better founded, had the advantage of being in possession of the throne.

father, acted as the arbiter of Italy? In August, 1494, he crossed the Alps. By so doing he opened a new act in the drama of European history. Henceforth the principle of the balance of power was to give unity to the political plot of modern Europe. And before the struggle for Italy was ended by the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559), the nations had all awakened to their national individuality. Italy gave to her invaders all the treasures of the new art and knowledge of mankind and literature which had come to her with the fall of Constantinople (1453), and the rediscovery of Greek. But the invasion of Italy now begun, and continued by the successors of Charles (1494-1518), not only thereafter involved France in a tremendous struggle with the Austro-Spanish Power, but left her financially exhausted when that struggle commenced. Had she not foolishly wasted her resources in these wars of aggression, her strength in the following centuries would have been wellnigh irresistible.

As it was, though France contributed singularly little to the innovations of the age, yet, thanks to her contact with foreign nations, she assimilated and profited by them. The Renaissance in art and literature, like the printing-press; the Reformation, like the discovery of America, were inventions of other lands, but France, with her ever-ready acceptance of new ideas, adopted them, and imprinted on them the stamp of her peculiar genius.

Before starting for Italy, Charles must needs secure the neutrality of the enemies who were threatening his frontiers. His marriage had given Maximilian a pretext to utilize the wrath of the English and the Spaniards. The English, who saw in the unity of France their last hopes of recovering Normandy and Guienne disappear, determined to be paid for it. Henry VII. landed an army at Calais. Charles bought him off for

745,000 crowns (Treaty of Étapes, November, 1492). Ferdinand of Aragon, threatening to cross the Pyrenees, was given the Provinces of Cerdagne and Roussillon (Treaty of Barcelona, January, 1493). Maximilian had not only been cheated of Brittany and a wife, but insulted by the sending back of his daughter Margaret. But at least he recovered with her the dowry of Franche-Comté and Artois, promised by the Treaty of Arras. By the Treaty of Senlis (May, 1493), Charles ceded these territories, with Charolais, to him. So much, in so short a time and for so little gain, was the work of Louis XI. undone.

Charles marched through Italy in triumph, his brilliant entourage, his disciplined army and artillery filling the Italians with admiration. From Pavia and Florence he passed to Rome, from Rome to Naples, and assumed the nominal kingship of that realm without striking a blow. But Lodovico and the rest of the Italians, who had themselves opened the gates of Italy to the foreign invader, were soon anxious to be rid of their dissolute and insolent guests. Commynes, from Venice, sent warning to Charles at Naples that a new league, of Pope and Maximilian, of Venice, Spain, and Milan, had been formed to drive the French out of Italy (March 25, 1495). Charles had no choice but to beat a retreat. At Fornovo, in the Duchy of Parma, his way was barred by a formidable army of the confederates. With great heroism the French army cut its way through superior numbers. The "finest army Italy has ever seen"—so the Marquis of Mantua had described it—only succeeded in plundering the French baggage-waggons (July 5, 1495). It was in this battle that Pierre du Terrail, Chevalier de Bayard, the flower of French chivalry, performed his first feats of arms. Three years later Charles died of an accidental blow—"a Prince," says Commynes, "of insignificant appearance

and indifferent ability, but a better creature could not be found." On the eve of his death he had been preparing a second attack upon Italy in alliance with Spain (Treaty of Alcala, November 25, 1497).

With him the direct line of Valois became extinct. He was succeeded by his cousin, of the collateral branch of Valois-Orleans, descended from Louis I., Duke of Orleans, second son of Charles V.

Since Charles had generously released him from prison at Bourges, where he had been confined after his capture at St. Aubin, Louis of Orleans had been loyal to the Crown. As Louis XII. he soon established himself firmly on the throne by acting upon the prudent and generous maxim that it would ill become the King of France to avenge the wrongs of the Duke of Orleans. Whilst still young and gay, he had been forced to marry Jeanne, daughter of Louis XI., whose gentle nature did not, in his eyes, compensate for her revolting ugliness. Now, by the marriage contract of Charles and Anne, their respective rights over Brittany had been merged in the survivor. The Duchy had therefore returned to the widow, and was once more separated from France. It was an evident political necessity that it should be again united to the Crown. Anne had made extravagant demonstrations of grief for Charles, being, indeed, the first widow of France to wear black as a symbol of constancy. But her ambition and the public weal might induce her not to quit the throne. The Pope, Alexander VI., readily granted Louis a divorce; for that cynical sensualist was anxious to found a principality in the Papal States for the benefit of his favourite son, Cesare Borgia.

He undertook to second Louis' designs on Italy, provided that Borgia had his share in the spoil. The latter came himself to France; terms were arranged; Borgia

received the Duchy of Valentinois ; the unfortunate Jeanne was repudiated ; and Anne of Brittany, "vowing she would ne'er consent, consented" (January, 1499). The marriage contract shows how much Anne was master of the situation, and that, if she was a good Bretonne, she was a bad Frenchwoman. For not only was the administration of Brittany preserved to the Duchess, and its independence maintained intact, but it was stipulated that the Duchy should pass, not to the heir of France, but to the second son issuing from this marriage, or, failing him, to the second grandson. Reunion with the kingdom was thus provided against.

After a stormy and passionate youth, the new King had settled down into a calm and kindly middle age. He remained devoted to his wife, and throughout his reign was dominated by her practical intelligence and the counsel of his friend, the Cardinal-Legate, Georges d'Amboise. But he maintained certain obstinate prepossessions of his own. Unfortunately, he was encouraged by the Cardinal to prosecute the principal of these—namely, to continue the Italian policy of his predecessor, to assert the right of the House of Anjou to Naples, and his own private claim to the Duchy of Milan. That claim, based on the marriage of Louis of Orleans with the daughter of Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1387), was none of the strongest.

But Lodovico Sforza was doubly hateful as a usurper and the betrayer of Charles VIII. Assuming the title of Duke of Milan, and making treaties with Spain, Venice, the Swiss Cantons, and Denmark, Louis marched an army, in concert with the Pope and the Venetians, and under the generalship of the Italian *condottiere* Trivulzio, upon Milan. Lodovico fled to Como. Louis entered Milan in triumph through streets decorated with fleurs-de-lis (October, 1499). But in February, Lodovico



Aug. Rischgala.

FRANÇOIS I. (1515-1547).

From the portrait by Titian in the Louvre.

appeared with an army of Swiss and Germans. The tables were turned for a moment. Then Louis sent a fresh army across the Alps, and the day of Novara sealed the fate of the Sforza. Lodovico, deserted by his Swiss mercenaries, was taken prisoner, and ended his days in a dark and dismal dungeon, cut out of the solid rock, in the Castle of Loches.

The idea of a Crusade, which had been in the air since the fall of Constantinople, was actually realized at this time. In 1499 and in 1501, Louis XII. sent a fleet to act in concert with the Venetians, whose welcome to a new sea Power in the Mediterranean was not likely to be whole-hearted. The expedition, the last of the French Crusades, ended in the inevitable failure of such a combination. Meantime, an alliance even more foolish and more fatal had been entered into by Louis with Ferdinand of Aragon. By a treaty signed at Granada, November 11, 1500, the two Sovereigns agreed to share the kingdom of Naples in a vague partition. Thus Ferdinand was given a footing in the Peninsula. In June a French army marched from Milan, and Federigo, King of Naples, was forced to capitulate. He was given Anjou in compensation. The French and Spaniards were now installed side by side in the country ; the division of the spoils was likely to cause more trouble than their winning. They were soon at loggerheads, and a series of small encounters and of chivalrous combats took place, in which the Chevalier de Bayard gained great renown. But the French lost ground, and in August, 1503, Louis, who had been easily deceived by Ferdinand's pacific pretensions, was roused to make a great effort to regain his ascendancy. An army was sent to attack the Spaniards in Roussillon. It failed miserably. Another army was raised to succour the French at Naples. But three months were wasted before the gates of Rome, whilst Georges d'Amboise was

endeavouring, but in vain, to secure for himself the Holy See, vacated by the death of Alexander VI. When at length, in October, this army joined the French forces at the mouth of the Garigliano, the Spaniards had had time to concentrate their forces under Gonzalvo. He refused to give battle, being content to contain the French till time forced them to retire upon Gaeta. There they were compelled to treat. Naples was lost for ever. In March, 1504, Louis signed a truce for three years with Spain.

It was now (September, 1504) that Louis signed the incredible Conventions of Blois, the provisions of which had already been considered in 1501. He was anxious to gain the support of Maximilian in Italy against the Venetians, whose neighbourhood to Milan must soon lead to hostilities. He was anxious, too, to receive from the King of the Romans the "investiture," which would place his position as Duke of Milan beyond dispute. In return, he promised his infant daughter Claude in marriage to Maximilian's grandson, Charles of Luxemburg, afterwards Charles V., and, as her dowry, Burgundy, Milan, Genoa, Brittany, and the counties of Asti and Blois—half of France, not to mention Italy.*

Maximilian, King of the Romans, Austrian Sovereign, and, through the rights of his son Philippe le Beau, Burgundian Prince, was consumed by a vague ambition of forming Spain, Italy, Flanders, and the Empire into one dominion under his descendants. But what are we to think of a King of France and his Cardinal adviser,

* Charles was grandson also of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.

Maximilian. Ferdinand = Isabella.

Philippe le Beau = Juana.

Charles (V.) of Luxemburg,
afterwards of Castile.

who for the sake of the private possession of Milan could thus dismember France? It seems probable that the jealousy and ambition of the Queen were largely responsible.

Anne of Brittany had no son. She was madly jealous of Louise of Angoulême, whose son François was heir to the throne.* For that reason, and to make sure that Brittany would remain under the government of her daughter Claude, she opposed the idea of her marriage with François.

Hardly were the Conventions signed, however, when Isabella of Spain died, and left to Ferdinand the administration of Castile, to the exclusion of her daughter and Philippe le Beau. The latter at once assumed the title of King, and entered into lively opposition to Ferdinand. This fact, or the fact that he had received the coveted investiture, seems to have changed Louis' policy. In May, 1505, he made a will in which the marriage of Claude with François, Count of Angoulême, was ordered. The Estates were summoned to meet at Tours (May, 1506), and declared the national eagerness for the match. The betrothal then took place, equally to the disgust of Anne, Maximilian, and Philippe le Beau.

The scene in the struggle for the balance of power amongst the nations, of which we cannot recount all the diplomatic interludes, changed once more to Italy. The revolt of Genoa, and its suppression by Louis, seemed for a moment to have made him master of that desired land (1507). In December, 1508, he entered with Pope Julius II., Maximilian, and Ferdinand into the League of Cambrai, formed to destroy the growing power of his old allies, the Venetians. In April Louis crossed the Alps with an army, which, in place of the turbulent and expensive Swiss mer-

* Louise of Savoy married Charles of Angoulême, great-grandson of Charles V.

cenaries of his former expeditions, was largely composed of the national French infantry, which Charles VII. had called into being, and Louis XI., fearing like a despot, had disbanded. They gained a brilliant victory over the Venetians at Agnadello (May, 1509). This success at once dissolved the League. The warlike and treacherous Pope, having gained what he wanted from Venice, immediately began to contrive the Holy League to drive the French barbarians out of Italy. It was joined by Maximilian, Henry VIII., Ferdinand, the Swiss, and Venice. Against this League, Gaston de Foix, Duke of Nemours, the King's nephew, fought valiantly for France, till, in winning the Battle of Ravenna (April, 1512), he lost his life. His military genius had revealed itself in a series of rapid infantry marches. With him the French resistance came quickly and ignominiously to an end. By the Battle of Novara (June, 1513) the Swiss drove the French out of Milan.

In the north, Henry VIII. landed at Calais, and, acting in concert with Maximilian, routed the French at Guinegate (August, 1513), whilst Louis' only allies, the Scots, were beaten at Flodden Field. Encouraged by Marguerite of Austria, the Swiss entered Burgundy. Left without men, money, or instructions, the French general, La Trémouille, signed the Treaty of Dijon (September, 1513). The King was to abandon Italy, to pay the Swiss 400,000 crowns, and not to raise any more levies in Switzerland without the consent of the cantons. This treaty Louis could not bring himself to ratify, much to the annoyance of the Swiss.

At last the death of Anne of Brittany opened the door to a settlement of these wearisome wars and kaleidoscopic alliances. Not only was the marriage of Claude with François, which the jealous Queen had refused to allow

to be celebrated, at length consummated (May, 1514),* but the King of France himself was now in the diplomatic marriage market. After signing a new truce with Ferdinand, and giving his adhesion to the Council of Lateran to conciliate the Pope, he detached England from the Austrian alliance. A peace was concluded in London, whereby Henry was granted Tournai, and a yearly pension of 100,000 crowns for ten years. Louis married Mary Tudor, Henry's young and charming sister, whose hand Marguerite had hoped to secure for Charles of Austria. But the gaities of a bridegroom of fifty-four, seduced by the charms of a bride of sixteen, proved too much for the enfeebled constitution of the King. He died within a few months (January 1, 1515). His devoted people called him the Father of his Country, and likened his end to that of the pelican. His foreign policy, indeed, had proved as obstinate and unsuccessful as it was politically inept. But his countrymen took pride in the operations of their King. Louis' real claim to the devotion of his people rests upon his administration of affairs at home. In this he shared the credit with Georges d'Amboise, the first of those Cardinal-Ministers who were to play so large a part in the future history of the kingdom. "Let George do as he pleases," Louis used to say. And this policy of *Laissez faire à Georges* led to an extraordinary revival of prosperity in France. Seconded by the marvellous power of recuperation which has always distinguished the French nation, and by a just and economical administration, which established order and security, and encouraged commerce, the land recovered as if by magic from the devastations of foreign invaders and civil disorder. Cities expanded, villages

* François afterwards succeeded in persuading Claude to bequeath her duchy of Brittany to her eldest son, and from that time (1532) onwards the history of Brittany is merged in that of France.

arose, as by enchantment, in the woods and waste places. The land was put once more under cultivation, and the revenue from the royal estates, rising in common with the rest, increased so rapidly that Louis was able to carry out his enterprises abroad, whilst reducing taxation at home. Nor were the Italian wars barren of good results. With the increased security of communication, merchants thought less now of going to Naples or London than formerly to Lyons or Geneva. And this communication with the rich markets and highly-developed art and luxury of Italy diffused a vivifying influence upon French art, commerce, and civilization. The Italian Renaissance stimulated and modified French art before overwhelming it under François I. The treasures of art and ancient literature, the artists themselves, brought from Italy by the French conquerors who had seen the Chartreuse of Pavia, and admired the paintings of Leonardo, did not create a new birth of intellectual and artistic interest so much as direct an already existing taste into new channels.

The Cardinal-Minister was himself an intelligent patron of this movement. His château of Gaillon, near Rouen, and the Palais de Justice of Rouen connect his name with some of the finest examples of early French Renaissance architecture, before French art had lost its originality and become wholly italianized. They preserve the traditions of the castles of Blois, and graft upon them the ornamentation of the Chartreuse of Pavia.

XIV

FRANÇOIS I.
A.D. 1515—1547

BROUGHT up in an atmosphere of maternal adoration, and nourished on the romances of chivalry, François from first to last was eager to shine as an Amadis rather than a Sovereign ; to accomplish some great and brilliant feat of arms rather than to earn the gratitude of his people by humdrum attention to the business of governing. Italy was the only theatre for such achievements as he desired. Brave and handsome, endowed with great personal charm, skilled in arms and pleasure-loving, clever, shallow, vain, Italy called him with a siren voice to the land where poets sang of Orlando. From first to last Milan and Naples occupied the thoughts of François I.

Within a few days of his accession Charles of Austria came of age, at fifteen, and thus the two great rivals entered upon the scene at the same moment. As possible husbands, we have seen, they had already been of importance. An agreement was shortly signed by which Charles was to marry Renée, second daughter of Louis XII., who was to bring as her dower Berry and 200,000 crowns.

François lost no time in invading Italy. By August he had crossed the Alps with a magnificent army, numbering some 30,000 infantry, of which 10,000 were Frenchmen, and the rest *lansquenets* (Germans). The Swiss held the passes, but, making a brilliant turning movement, François

surmounted the Route de Larche, a steep and narrow defile which had been left unguarded as impracticable. Amazed at the appearance of the French upon their flank, the forces of the Holy League retreated to Chiasso, whilst the French occupied Turin and Novara. Marching to Marignano, François entered into negotiations with the Swiss in Milan ; but the Cardinal Schinner, hoping to take him by surprise, made a sortie. François' Venetian allies were encamped at Lodi, some miles distant from Marignano. The dust raised by the troops of the League gave timely warning. The battle raged till nightfall, and remained undecided. On the morrow the arrival of the Venetians turned the scale. The Swiss fought valiantly ; 14,000 of the enemy lay dead upon the battle-field. François was master of Milan (September 13-14, 1515). The King had won his spurs, and it is characteristic of his romantic love of chivalry that he insisted upon being knighted after the battle by the bravest of his knights, the Chevalier Bayard (*le Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*). The victory of Marignano cast a halo of glory round the young King, which throughout all his career of impulsive and extravagant action, and ill-directed diplomacy, was never wholly eclipsed.

Marignano had not settled everything. In the spring Maximilian appeared with an army of 30,000 men outside Milan. But after a stay of three days he abandoned his troops in the night, and returned to Germany. Meantime the Pope had come to terms with François. He recognized his right to Milan, Parma, and Piacenza, in return for François' alliance with Florence and the Church.

And at Bologna in December was negotiated the Concordat, an agreement of capital importance in the social and ecclesiastical history of France. By it the Pragmatic Sanction of 1438, promulgated by Charles VII., sup-

pressed by Louis XI., and maintained by Charles VIII. and Louis XII., was revoked.

The Pragmatic Sanction had recognized the supremacy of the Councils over the sovereign Pontiffs, and, suppressing the rights of reversion and expectative,* and the first-fruits (*annates*) claimed by the Pope, had granted to the Chapters of the Churches the right of electing to all vacant benefices. The churches were now deprived of their traditional right of election. For it was agreed that the King should have the right of nominating to benefices, with some reservations, and the Pope that of instituting the candidate presented by the King.

The Pope renounced the rights of reversion and expectative, but upon the question of first-fruits, as of Councils, there was a significant silence in the Concordat, which was no doubt intended to be interpreted, as it soon was, to the advantage of the Holy See.

The Concordat was not registered without protest from the *Parlement* of Paris. The King's Chancellor, Duprat, claimed that it was a triumph for Gallicanism. In a sense, indeed, it was. But it was much more a triumph of the absolute power of the Crown. Throughout his reign François dispensed with the States General, and he now usurped the rights of the Church. For the spiritual power, which the Pope thus ceded in exchange for temporal blessings, was ceded, not to the Gallic Church, but to the temporal despot of France. The disastrous effect upon the morality of the upper clergy can hardly be exaggerated. They were composed of relations or favourites of the King, of soldiers, artists, or officials, whose services or merits were rewarded with the revenues of an abbey, or of clients of the Papal Court, whose com-

* *I.e.*, the right of the Pope to reserve for a candidate nominated by him a benefice even before it was vacant. *Annates* were the revenues of the first year of every benefice conferred (See p. 172).

plaisance was bought by the emolument of a French bishopric. These formed an aristocracy within the Church, which grew more and more out of touch with the *curés* and vicars of the parishes. The opposition of this democratic clergy to the proud and wealthy royal clergy soon passed into opposition to royalty itself, with which they were identified. First the bitterness of the wars of religion, then the scepticism which prepared the way for the Revolution, can largely be traced to the Concordat of Pope Leo X. and François I.

The moral deterioration which accompanied an age of licentious Courts, political Churchmen, and religious fanatics, was reflected but too clearly in the Judicature. The *Parlement* of Paris lost its reputation for rectitude. Those Judges who were not corrupt were religiously unjust.

Meanwhile a "Perpetual Peace" was signed with the Swiss cantons at Fribourg in November, 1516, at the price of a huge indemnity; for the Swiss, like the Dutch, never made the mistake of asking too little. In August friendly relations had been established with Charles, who had succeeded Ferdinand of Spain; by the Treaty of Noyon it was agreed that Charles should marry François' infant daughter, with a dowry of the French share of Naples; the Treaty of Cambrai (March, 1517) settled the differences of François and Maximilian. There was talk of a Crusade against the Turks, for the success of the Sultan Selim was beginning to cause disquiet in Europe. François, too, made some foolish proposals for a joint attack upon England, which were presently revealed to Henry VIII. But there was a general peace till 1519. It was the lull before the storm. The wars for Italy were over; they had only resulted in the precarious tenure of Milan. But already the dazzling prospect of a prize more dear even than Italy had begun to tempt the vanity of

François. In November, 1516, Count Francis of Sickingen had come to Amboise to promise the French King his aid when next an Emperor was to be elected. The struggle for the Imperial Crown was about to begin, involving that for the preponderance of the House of France or Austria in Europe, which was not to end till 1559. In 1519 Maximilian died, and the Empire was vacant.

In spite of François' utmost efforts, Charles V. was elected. Charles was now not only Emperor and King of Spain, and therefore a claimant to the kingdom of Naples; he not only possessed Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and the Tyrol, but also, as grandson of Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy, he was the heir of Charles the Bold. And this inheritance alone, of Burgundy and its dependencies, with Artois, Franche-Comté, the towns of the Somme, and Flanders, made him the natural enemy of France.

Great as was the power of such an Emperor, it was diffused; though powerful, Charles was poor. His might was always balanced by this weakness. The strength of France lay in her new unity; the French King could wield a highly concentrated power, levy taxes without the consent of his people, and direct an organized, if not homogeneous, army. When asked by Charles V. how much money he derived from his subjects, François replied: "As much as I want." But whilst Charles had no money, François squandered his. Yet without allies France would have been overmatched. She was compelled, as we shall see, to seek the assistance of the Turks, and even to support the Lutherans abroad. For many years, indeed, the policy of being Catholic at home and Protestant abroad was to be pursued by the French politicians.

Without aiming at a universal monarchy, Charles,

as Emperor, regarded himself as the temporal chief of Christianity, whose duty it was to combat heretics, like the Turks, abroad, and heretics, like the Reformers, at home. Moreover, it was his duty to reconstitute the integrity of the Empire by conquering once more all fiefs and territory—like the kingdom of Arles, for instance, or Milan—of which it had at any time been deprived.

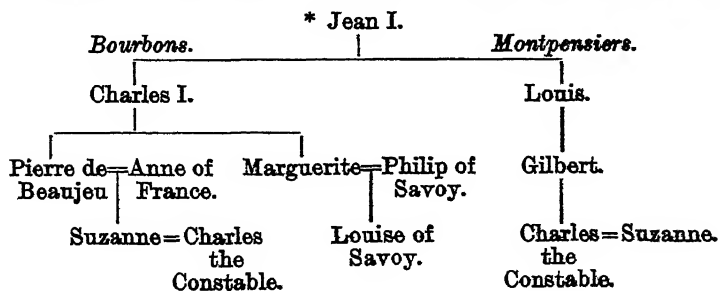
To humble his ambitious rival, François first endeavoured to make an alliance with Henry VIII. In 1520 it was arranged that the two Sovereigns should meet. The sumptuous splendours of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, near Guines, are known to every English reader. But that extravagant display, those jousts and tourneys and banquets, and chivalrous encounters of King and King, were rather signs of mutual jealousy between Sovereigns, each anxious to dazzle the world, than symptoms of a cordial understanding. They parted on June 24, calling each other "brother." A treaty, indeed, was signed, which reiterated the indebtedness of the French King, according to the agreements of 1514 and 1518. But if François thought that he had engaged his "brother's" support against the Emperor, he was soon undeceived. On his way home Henry had an interview, less brilliant but more cordial, with Charles V., and signed a secret treaty with him, in which the two Sovereigns agreed to discuss their several interests.

Hostilities between France and the Emperor commenced in March, 1521; François would have been better advised to begin them earlier. As it was, Charles, having been allowed time enough to settle internal affairs and procure alliances, by the end of a year had regained Navarre, and almost driven the French out of Italy. It was in Italy that François had made his greatest effort. There Lautrec de Foix, the Governor of Milan, who owed his position to the fact that his sister, Madame de

Châteaubriant, was the King's mistress, had received a reinforcement of 16,000 Swiss, without the money to pay them. He was deserted by his soldiers, and defeated at the Battle of Bicocca (April, 1522).

The last act in the long struggle between the Kings of France and their great vassals *apanagés* was now to be played out.

Charles, Duke of Bourbon, Constable of France, was the head of the only great house which, imprudently strengthened by the Kings themselves, remained to rival those of Orleans and Angoulême. Suzanne, the daughter and heiress of Pierre and Anne de Beaujeu, who had succeeded in largely augmenting their domains, had married her cousin, Charles of Bourbon, and thus united the two branches of Bourbons and Montpensiers.* The whole of the centre of France therefore contributed its wealth to the clever and ambitious Constable of France. In 1521 he was left a widower and childless. It is said that the King's mother, Louise of Savoy, fell in love with this handsome Prince and gallant soldier, and that his refusal to marry her caused her to plot his ruin. In any case, in the absence of a male heir to the domains of the Bourbons, and in the presence of a nobleman so proud, powerful, and ambitious, it became an obvious matter of high policy for the King to claim the reversion of those counties which, belonging



originally to the royal domain, had been granted to the Bourbons as appanages ; whilst the Queen-mother claimed other fiefs as the granddaughter of Charles I. of Bourbon, and therefore heiress of Suzanne. So the power of this too influential Bourbon would be reduced. The case was tried at length, but before it was decided Anne of Beaujeu died (November, 1522), and François promptly laid his hands on some of the domains which were *sub judice*. The injustice of this proceeding drove the Constable to extremities. For some time past he had been in negotiation with the enemy. At last, in July, 1523, he entered into agreements with Henry VIII. and Charles V. The Emperor was to attack Narbonne in August, Henry to land in Normandy, and Bourbon, with his followers, was to co-operate with 10,000 men raised for him in Germany. He was to receive Leonora, the Emperor's sister, in marriage, and undertook to recognize Henry VIII. as King of France. But his decision, when made, came too late. The Spaniards only succeeded in capturing Fontarabia, the German *lansquenets* were almost annihilated by the Count of Guise in crossing the Meuse, and the English, after advancing to within a few miles of Paris, recoiled before reinforcements sent by François. Bourbon, waiting for the arrival of the *lansquenets* before declaring himself, hesitated too long. François, on his way to Italy with an army, called upon the Constable to accompany him. He replied by fleeing with one attendant to the Emperor, a reinforcement which was of little value to Charles.

After suffering severely during the winter before Milan, the French army in Italy, under Bonivet, met with a reverse in their retreat in the spring, whilst crossing the Sesia. In this engagement the gallant Chevalier Bayard lost his life. Still obsessed with the idea of recovering the Duchy of Milan, François once more crossed the Alps

in October, 1534, and laid siege to Pavia. Strongly fortified, the place held out whilst the imperial army gathered round the besiegers in the Park of Mirabello. Ensued the bloody Battle of Pavia, when some 8,000 Frenchmen were slain, and François, wounded and fighting gallantly to the last, was taken prisoner (February 25, 1525). From the fortress of Pizzighettone he wrote the famous letter to his mother: "Nothing remains to me save honour and my life." He was taken to Madrid, where Charles kept him until March, 1526, discussing the terms of his release.

The victory of Pavia had placed Charles in a position so overwhelming that his allies immediately began to restore the balance. The Italians were ready to league against him. Henry VIII. quickly made a defensive alliance with the Queen-Regent, who undertook to pay him 100,000 crowns a year for life (August, 1525). The Turks threatened to invade Hungary. The unrest in Spain and Flanders also caused Charles some uneasiness. These considerations induced him to sign the Treaty of Madrid (January, 1526).

François, who had at one time, in a fit of heroism, declared himself ready to abdicate rather than cede a single province, agreed to restore Burgundy and its dependencies; to renounce his claims to Naples, Milan, Asti, and Genoa; to cede Tournai and the suzerainty of Artois and Flanders; to furnish a fleet and army for the crowning of the Emperor at Rome, and for a Crusade against the infidels; to restore Bourbon to all his property and privileges; to abandon his allies, the Pope, Venice, Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, and the Dukes of Gelderland, Würtemberg, and La Mark; to take over Charles' debts to Henry VIII., and, as a pledge of peace (since Queen Claude was dead), to espouse Leonora of Portugal, the Emperor's sister. His two sons were given

in hostage for the accomplishment of these conditions, which were to be ratified by the States General and the Courts of the kingdom, and if not fulfilled within four months François himself was to return to prison at Madrid.

No sooner was he free than François found every encouragement not to fulfil his obligations, which if performed would ruin his kingdom, and if not performed must stain his honour. The English and Italians alike were anxious to check the ambition of Charles. At Cognac, May, 1526, a treaty was signed between François, the Pope, the Venetians, Florence, and other Italian States, for the deliverance of Italy and the release of the sons of France. It was stipulated that Sforza should be allowed to keep possession of Milan.

François, however, at first took no action in support of his Italian allies. He was busy with the pleasures of the Court and the chase, or negotiating with Henry, with whom he concluded a "perpetual peace." In order to avoid redeeming his word, or, in default of fulfilling the conditions of Madrid, returning to captivity, the King and his advisers—Madame, Duprat, Montmorency, and so forth—decided that it was necessary to make a show of national sentiment in favour of his breaking his engagements. Deputies from Burgundy had already declared that it was contrary to the coronation oath for a French King to alienate any portion of the domain, and protested against the transfer of their province to the Emperor. An Assembly was therefore summoned at Paris (December, 1527). But it was not an Assembly of the Three Estates—there was something too democratic in the States General to suit the taste of the absolute monarch—but an Assembly of Notables, as it was called, consisting of Cardinals, Archbishops, Princes of the Blood, Grands Seigneurs, Gentlemen, and Presidents of the Provincial Parliaments. Before this select audience



Aug. Rochet.

HENRI II. (1547-1559).

From a painting in the Louvre.

the King recounted, with much eloquence and pathos, the events of his reign, declared himself ready to return to Madrid if honour and his country required it, and explained that much money was needed, whether for a ransom for his sons or for a war with the Emperor. The Notables assured him that he was absolved from an oath taken under protest and compulsion, granted him the aid he sought, and thanked him for "asking graciously where it was within his power to demand."

The war was resumed in Italy. After a successful campaign Lautrec laid siege to Naples. Venetian and Genoese fleets blockaded the port. The town was saved by the defection of Andrea Doria; Montmorency and Duprat foolishly insisted on fortifying Savona, and raising it into a commercial rival to Genoa. The Genoese replied by throwing in their lot with the Emperor. The French were obliged to raise the siege of Naples, and the army, retreating, was almost annihilated at Aversa. In the following year the Count of Saint-Pol was defeated and taken prisoner at Landriano (June, 1529). So one more was added to the list of French failures in Italy. "It would have been better worth while to give six Savonas than to offend Doria," was Wolsey's comment upon such diplomacy.

That diplomacy, indeed, and the direction of affairs, had passed into the hands of inefficient and unworthy hands. Whilst François was spending the money that might have defrayed the wages of his soldiers, in building lordly pleasure-houses on the Loire, and was becoming accustomed to be governed by his mistress, Madame d'Étampes, affairs were bungled by the self-seeking or incapacity of his Ministers, Admiral de Brion, Duprat, Chabot, Montmorency, and Madame, his mother, Louise of Savoy.

Of these, Madame and Montmorency were now anxious for peace. The Turks and the Protestants were embar-

rassing the Emperor in Germany. After prolonged negotiations, therefore, at Cambrai, where Louise of Savoy and Margaret of Austria negotiated for France and the Emperor respectively, the Treaty of Cambrai was signed (August, 1529). The "Ladies' Peace" was a repetition of the Treaty of Madrid, with some slight alterations. The cession of Burgundy and its dependencies, and the towns of the Somme, was waived, for Charles recognized that the sentiment of the nation was against it. The Dauphin and the Duke of Orleans were to be ransomed with 2,000,000 crowns; otherwise the ignominious concessions of Madrid were repeated. In July of the following year the young Princes were paid for and released, and François' marriage with Leonora, so long delayed, was consummated.

With the conclusion of this treaty, Montmorency, who was throughout identified with a policy of peace, and even friendship with the Emperor, became the chief of the Government. No other policy, indeed, but peace was possible. The country was exhausted by profitless wars and expensive conventions; nor was the occasion ripe for an aggressive policy on the part of a Prince who had shown at Madrid and Cambrai that he would not keep his engagements whether with friend or foe. But François would never despair of reconquering Italy, and in these circumstances Montmorency's diplomacy was ridiculous. Whilst hoping to gain the support of the Lutherans in Germany, he persecuted the Reformers in France. By a *rapprochement* with the Pope* he compromised the alliance with Henry VIII., and, whilst intriguing in Italy and elsewhere with the enemies of the Emperor, he hoped to arrive at a friendly understanding

* It was to secure the alliance of the Pope that François married his second son, Henri, to Catherine de' Medici (1533). The Dauphin died a few years later, leaving Henri heir to the throne.

with him. In fact, the Treaty of Cambrai could not be a lasting settlement. The fall of Montmorency was the necessary prelude to the outbreak of war in 1536. Once more aggression in Italy was the pretext and the cause.

In preparing for this war François had introduced changes in his army which are of social as well as military moment. For the modern soldier dates from this epoch. The old francs-archers were abolished. The increasing importance of a native infantry was recognized. The greedy, ill-disciplined, and often treacherous Swiss mercenaries, who had hitherto formed the bulk of that arm, were largely replaced by territorial legions of 6,000 men apiece, raised in Normandy, Picardy, Brittany, Burgundy, Champagne, Dauphiné, Languedoc, Provence, and Guienne.*

With this new army François invaded Savoy and Piedmont in February, 1536. The Emperor denounced the ambition of his rival before the Pope at Rome. The dogs of war were once more let loose.

The Emperor crossed the Alps at the end of July, intending to co-operate with a Spanish army from the Pyrenees in the invasion of Provence, whilst the Flemings overran Picardy. But the Spaniards were repulsed before Narbonne, and Montmorency, who had been recalled to command, conducted a defensive campaign in Provence, which defeated the invader almost without a blow. Refusing to join issue, and retreating as far as Avignon, he laid the country desert. Charles marched onwards "without glory, for he saw no enemy; without food, for every field was bare." Famine, and the failure of the army from Spain, compelled him to retreat. When he regained Italy in September, he had lost half his army from sickness and starvation. In the north, the Count

* Lemonnier, ap. Lavissee, V. ii. 84 *et seq.*

of Nassau was held in check by the gallant defence of Péronne.

François prefaced the campaign of the ensuing year by a parody of Charles' denunciation of him to the Pope. Summoning a Bed of Justice at the Louvre, he declared that his rebellious vassal had forfeited his tenure of Flanders, Artois, and Charolais. Some desultory campaigns concluded in a truce after Montmorency had recovered Piedmont. The truce was renewed at Nice in the following June, and in July the two Princes, meeting at Aigues-Mortes, declared themselves the firmest of friends. To the astonishment of Europe, Charles marched in friendly triumph across France, and was fêted at Paris (January, 1540), on his way to crush a rebellion at Ghent. Then, having attained his object and avoided a sea-passage, he turned and denounced François as the ally of the infidel Suleiman, and bestowed the Duchy of Milan on his own son Philip. Throughout these proceedings François had been duped by the suggestion, if not the promise, that the Emperor would give Milan and the hand of his daughter Maria to the youngest son of France.

Disillusionment brought about the fall of Montmorency, who had, as ever, encouraged the idea of friendship with Charles. A succession of Ministers followed, but Madame d'Étampes reigned supreme. Between her and Diane de Poitiers, the clever and accomplished mistress of the Dauphin, there had long been a bitter rivalry, which divided the Court and policy of France. Montmorency had thrown in his lot with the Dauphin.

In July, 1542, then, François once more tried the fortune of war in the hope of regaining his darling Milan, this time in conjunction with his Ottoman allies. With these allies installed at Toulon, ignoring the ominous rebellion of La Rochelle, which gave voice to the growing resent-

ment of an overtaxed country, ignoring the combined attack upon his northern frontiers by Charles and Henry VIII., François, ever intent upon Italy, made a last effort in Piedmont. The Duke of Enghien and Montluc gained a brilliant victory over the Imperial forces under the Marquis del Vasto at Ceresole (April, 1544). But the victory availed nothing, since the concerted advance of the Emperor and Henry VIII. upon Paris compelled François to recall his troops in haste from Italy.

A treaty with the Emperor was hastily signed at Crépy (September, 1544). Charles, who had no money to pay his army, and was embarrassed by the activity of the Protestants and Turks, agreed to decide within four months whether the Duke of Orleans should marry his daughter Maria, with the Low Countries and Franche-Comté for dowry, or a daughter of Ferdinand, with the dowry of the Duchy of Milan. The death of the Duke of Orleans soon solved the difficulty of the alternative. François renounced Flanders, Artois, Piedmont and Savoy, and Charles Burgundy. But the kernel of the treaty lay in a mutual engagement to fight the Turks and to restore "religious unity."

Meanwhile the English had taken Boulogne. In 1545 a combined movement was projected by the French to recover Boulogne, invade England, and intervene in Scotland on behalf of Mary Stuart. All three campaigns failed, and in June, 1546, François was compelled to sign the Treaty of Ardres, by which he undertook to pay the English 2,000,000 golden crowns within eight years. Boulogne was to be restored when the debt was paid.

In fact, the last years of François' reign were devoted to restoring "religious unity" by a furious persecution of the Lutherans.

At the beginning of the century the scandalous debauchery of the Bishops, priests, and monks had lent

force to a new movement for reform within the Church in France—an effort to reconcile the great truths of religious dogma with the light of the Renaissance which originated with the University itself. But the doctrines of Luther and Zwingli, the apparition of Protestantism (1517-1529), put an end to any hopes of pacific reform, and drew the more ardent reformers into the vortex of revolt against the official Church. The spirit of the Renaissance, coming from the South, had touched only the upper and leisured classes; the spirit of the Reformation was breathed from the North, and touched the moral and religious sentiments of the people. In 1523 the persecution of the Lutheran heresy was begun; Jean Vallière, of Falaise, was the first victim of the theologians of the Sorbonne. He was burnt at the stake in Paris, August, 1523. It was in that year that Jean Calvin, aged fourteen, came to study at the University. François himself was at first far from sharing the views of the extremists. Before his return from Madrid, he had written to the *Parlement* of Paris exhorting them to moderation. But in 1528, during the deliberations of the Council of Sens upon the doctrines of Lutheranism, a statue of the Virgin was mutilated. The rage of the Catholics broke loose, and thenceforth François, anxious to conciliate the clergy for their vote of money, followed the lead of the *Parlement* and the Sorbonne. There was soon no room for compromise. On the night of October 17, 1534, Paris was placarded with a coarse Protestant attack upon the Mass. A terrible outburst of fanaticism followed. Lutherans were burned by the score (1534-1547). The Press was muzzled.* The works of Calvin, Luther, Melanchthon,

* Driven from France in 1534, Calvin had published his great work, the *Institution Chrétienne*, in the following year from Bâle. In 1536 he settled in Geneva, which became the centre of the persecuted Reformers, whence issued the doctrine which has affected the religious life of Europe ever since.

Dolet, Marot, and the translations of the Holy Scriptures, were proscribed (1543).

The Place Maubert was the scene of the executions in Paris. Here Étienne Dolet was hanged, and then burned. At Meaux fourteen pyres were erected in one day, and all over the country, from Rouen to Toulouse, the Reformers and their books were burned. These odious executions reached a climax in the war of extermination directed against a whole people. At Mérindol and Cabrières, and the surrounding villages amongst the Alps of Provence, dwelt the descendants of the Vaudois (Waldenses) of the twelfth century. The pure and simple lives of this peaceful peasantry were no protection to them, seeing that they were attached to the religious doctrines of their ancestors. An ordinance was issued to *pousser à bout les Vaudois*. The Bishops of Provence and the *Parlement* of Aix raged furiously against them. In 1545 François sanctioned the decree, passed by the *Parlement* at Aix in 1540, condemning Mérindol to destruction. The Baron d'Oppède, President of the *Parlement*, and Polin de la Garde then conducted a regular military expedition against these unfortunate heretics. Mérindol, Cabrières, and the surrounding villages were destroyed, the country laid waste, the unarmed population scattered, starved, destroyed, and hundreds of men, women, and children, who had sought refuge in their church, were burned to death.

The King, who had authorized these horrors, perhaps partly in ignorance, and certainly under the influence of the fanatical Cardinal of Tournon, died in February, 1547.

What might he not have achieved if, instead of wasting his strength for the sake of a bauble of a kingdom beyond the Alps, he had spent his resources in seconding those adventurous pioneers of Brittany and Dieppe, who had begun to take a share in the discovery of the mines

and fisheries of the New Continent, and in directing the energies of his people towards the colonization of Canada ?* He supported, indeed, but half-heartedly, the three voyages of Jacques Cartier of St. Malo, who in 1534, 1535, 1541, had explored the St. Lawrence, and given the name of Nouvelle France to the country which had yet to wait more than half a century for the coming of Champlain. This much, at least, François achieved—his opposition to Charles V. prevented the establishment of the Spanish-Hapsburg monarchy as supreme in Europe.

It is not as a statesman or a patriot that France owes aught to the memory of that clever, attractive, but selfish King, so dull of foresight and infirm of purpose. The wars of aggression of this *Roi Chevalier* were popular, indeed, until they became too expensive, for chivalrous pomp and military glory, and the monarchy itself were always dear to the heart of the French nation. But he left his country a legacy of unsatisfied ambition, of financial disorder and economic exhaustion—a heritage of religious intolerance, of petticoat government, and of murderous folly. And he left her, in Henri II., an heir but too worthy of his heritage. The persecution of the Reformers was not only criminal, but foolish ; for in the nature of things it bled France of much of her best and staunchest blood, whilst it stimulated the secret propagandism of a militant and political creed.

The extravagance of François' wars, his Court, his buildings, and display had once more plunged the

* For, following in the footsteps of Spain and Portugal, the French adventurers had begun to traffic with Brazil, where Jean Denis of Honfleur touched as early as 1504. In 1506 Denis visited Newfoundland, and was followed in 1508 by Aubert of Dieppe, who sailed in a vessel fitted out by Jean Ango, father of the great and enterprising shipowner of that town. The Bretons discovered and named Cape Breton, and began to develop the cod-fisheries of those coasts.

finances of the kingdom into utter confusion. It was characteristic that, when he found himself too much in debt, he had turned upon his Superintendent of Finance,



MARGUERITE DE VALOIS, QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

(From a drawing in the Bibliothèque Nationale.)

Semblançay, and hanged him for obeying his orders and raising money at all hazards. At the beginning of the reign of Henri II., a rebellion on the part of Bordeaux

against an increase in the *gabelle* was savagely repressed by Montmorency.

It is, then, rather as the King of Culture that François claims a thought of gratitude in the history of French civilization. He not only enormously increased the size of his Court by creating a large number of offices, which he bestowed upon gentlemen of birth, who were awarded titles even though they did not possess lands, but, whilst thus rendering his Court the centre of social attraction, he delighted in making it also the most cultivated and brilliant in Europe. Artists like Leonardo da Vinci, scholars like Erasmus, men of letters and men of science, Greeks, Italians, were invited to this gay, elegant, and learned Court, where Mary Stuart was to be brought up under the eyes of Catherine de' Medici.

Something of the frivolity, the licentiousness, the intellectuality, and the cultivated sensuality of the French Court in these Renaissance days is mirrored in the *Contes* of the King's sister, Marguerite de Navarre, and of her servant, Bonaventure des Périers.*

And to house this gay and pleasure-loving Court, and to employ the chisels or brushes of the great Italian artists—Leonardo, Cellini, Rosso, Andrea del Sarto—whom François vied with the other monarchs of his age in pressing into his service, there sprang into being those charming châteaux on the banks of the Loire, which, with their forests of turrets, spires, aerial campaniles, and lofty roofs, their terraced gardens, superb staircases, and rich, flowing Italian ornament and arabesques, express the new spirit of the age in contrast to the gloomy feudal fortresses of the civil wars. Villers-Cotterets, Saint-Germain, the Hôtel-de-Ville of Paris, Fontainebleau (1528-1547), Chantilly, Blois, Madrid (the retreat in the Bois de Boulogne, which François so named to recall his imprison-

* The *Heptaméron* and the *Contes et Joyeux Devis*.

ment in Spain), and, above all, Chambord (1519-1550)—these are some of the delightful creations in which, before captive Italy wholly dominated her captors, the national architecture proved its vitality by a last effort of brilliant and original invention.

It is characteristic of the age that, in all probability, the same year (1538) saw Loyola, Calvin, and Rabelais treading the streets of Paris. Rabelais, like the architects of his period, preserves in his work much of medieval French tradition, overlaid with the ornamentation and knowledge derived from the New Birth of Antiquity. But, breaking away from medieval asceticism and hypocrisy, and the intellectual bondage of scholasticism, returning to Nature and preaching the enjoyment of the things of the flesh, as well as of the mind, he voices the unbridled laughter, the unschooled learning, the unrestrained, full-blooded life of the Renaissance. Loving the Calvinists as little as the vicious, ignorant, and avaricious monks, he draws his picture of the ideal Abbey of Thélème, where young men and maidens were to be occupied with noble toil and every high delight, and whose rule was the single maxim : "Do what you will."

XV

HENRI II.

A.D. 1547—1559

HENRI II., though physically robust and expert in manly exercises, was a man of little spirit and no will-power. Proud, gloomy, egotistical, and unforgiving, he allowed himself to be dominated throughout his life by Diane de Poitiers, a mistress twenty years his senior, by Montmorency, and the Guises. On succeeding to the throne, his first step was to replace at Court his father's advisers by those who had supported him and Montmorency during the period of their disgrace. But for the ambition of the Guises—the Duke, his numerous sons, and his brother, the Cardinal Jean de Lorraine—the Duke of Montmorency, the high-handed, avaricious, ambitious, forbidding Constable and Marshal of France, would have been absolute master of the realm. But Diane de Poitiers, dry and severe, who lived on good terms with Queen Catherine, was clever enough to play off the ambitions of the Guises against those of Montmorency. Their rivalry, indeed, dominates the politics of France throughout the reign. But on one point Henri's mistress and advisers were agreed. All alike were inspired with a fanatical zeal against the Reformers and Calvinists.

The English were still in possession of Boulogne. The Scots, who had been left out of the Treaty of Ardres, were smarting from Somerset's successful invasion.

The Queen-mother, Mary of Guise, therefore appealed to France for help, proposing to betroth her infant daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots, to the Dauphin. At the same time the English renewed the project of a marriage between Edward VI. and Mary. The Guises, finding their family interests involved, determined to support the Scots. A fleet was sent to Scotland, and, after a perilous voyage, the little Queen, escaping from the English cruisers, was brought to the Court of Catherine de' Medici (August, 1548). Peace was at length made between the three countries in 1550, England giving up Boulogne in exchange for 400,000 crowns in place of double that sum agreed upon in the Treaty of Ardres.

Henri pursued the policy of war with the Emperor inherited from his father, and for the same reasons—personal jealousy, a desire to reclaim Italy and Navarre, and the vaguer sense of the necessity of combating the preponderance of the House of Hapsburg. With this view, though so little a Reformer himself, he encouraged the Lutheran Princes to resist the Emperor in Germany. At Chambord, in January, 1552, he signed a treaty with Maurice of Saxony and the Reformers, promising them subsidies, and receiving in exchange the towns of Metz, Toul, and Verdun.

Thus threatened, Charles quickly came to terms with the German Lutherans. The persecution of their brethren in France was not likely to keep them long friendly with that country. The struggle now centred round Metz, to which siege was laid in October by the Imperial army. The defence was conducted with extraordinary spirit and courage by François, now Duc de Guise. Piqued by the resistance of a place which was hardly fortified, Charles concentrated an enormous force upon it, and came himself to direct the investment. But so stubborn was the defence,

so feeble the attack of his miscellaneous army, so terrible the losses of a winter siege, so empty was the Imperial treasury, that the Emperor was compelled to raise the siege at the end of December, swearing by the wounds of God at one moment that he would renounce his faith, at another that he would turn Franciscan. Of 60,000 men, the Duc de Guise reported, only 12,000 remained whole and sound in the imperial army.

The vigour of Guise's action contrasted strongly with the nerveless and ineffective campaigns conducted by Montmorency and the King in the North-East. The Constable, indeed, proved himself both cowardly and incapable, and his action was almost restricted to ravaging the country, whether friendly or hostile.

Meantime Charles had cemented an alliance with England by the marriage of his son, Philip II. of Spain, with Mary Tudor. And now, weary and worn out by the cares of Empire, which he had so long and so ably sustained, and which had brought him no nearer to his goal, Charles, who had been preparing to abdicate and to seek repose in the Monastery of San Yuste, signed a truce with Henri for five years (Vaucelles, February, 1556), in which the *status quo* was recognized. Henri broke the truce within the year.

Charles had not only ceded Italy, the Low Countries, and Spain to Philip, but it had been agreed that the son of Philip and Mary should reign over the Low Countries and England, whilst Don Carlos, Philip's son by his first marriage, should inherit his Spanish possessions. Thus, the frontiers of France were threatened on every side by the power of her rival, who was, at the same time, since he was not Emperor, free from the embarrassment of German Protestantism. Mary Tudor, cruel and vindictive, gave herself wholly to the policy of her husband and Catholic fanaticism. In Italy, the hot-

headed octogenarian Pope, Paul IV., found himself, with the Spaniards at Milan and Naples, in a similar position to Henri II. It was the inevitable policy of Pope and France to combine, and to endeavour to throw the Spaniards back behind the Pyrenees.*

Montmorency, indeed, was still in favour of peace, and still, in spite of his miserable performance during the last war, maintained his influence with the King. But the Guises were eager for war, and they carried the day, the King himself, so far as he counted, being inclined to the exercise of arms, and not devoid of ambition.

War was declared at the beginning of 1557. The Duc de Guise conducted an abortive campaign in Italy. But it was in the North-East of France that the day was lost. Philip had not only secured the support of Mary Tudor, but he was served by a soldier of real ability, Emmanuel-Philibert, Duke of Savoy, whose object was to regain his inheritance of Savoy and Piedmont, of which François I. had despoiled his father. Collecting an army of 60,000 men in the Netherlands, he made a feint on Champagne; then appeared unexpectedly before Saint Quentin, with his English allies. Admiral Coligny threw himself into the place with less than a thousand men, intending to hold it until relieved by Montmorency's army. The Constable came, indeed, to his relief. But he was marvellously maladroit in his coming. In crossing the Somme he exposed his whole flank to the enemy, and Philibert, attacking his scattered troops, utterly routed them. Some 10,000 men were killed or wounded; Montmorency himself was amongst the 6,000 prisoners (August, 1557).

"Is my son at Paris?" cried Charles, when the news of this startling victory reached that retired monarch in his

* M. Lemonnier, ap. Lavis, V., ii., p. 166, thinks the renewal of the war was a grave mistake, since by the Treaty of Vaucelles France had retained all her conquests. He seems to ignore the strategical position of Spain, as suggested above.

retreat at San Yuste. But Philip, who came to join the army, wasted his time in besieging Saint Quentin, Ham, Le Catelet. It seems certain that if he had marched upon Paris, he might have dictated terms of the most disastrous peace to Henri. But the Spanish King had the defects of his cold and calculating qualities; he lacked the fire and dash necessary for such a move. M. Lemonnier, indeed, attempts to justify him, dwelling on his lack of money and provisions. But these wants were not to be supplied by besieging Saint Quentin or Ham. The gallant Coligny, knowing that the fate of France hung on his efforts, made a desperate defence of the former city, and held it against overwhelming odds for a fortnight, before he was compelled to surrender. Paris, which had been panic-stricken, was saved. Philip, indeed, took and burned Noyon in October; but by the end of the month, François, Duc de Guise, recalled from Italy, was in the field to oppose him. He retired to the Low Countries, and Guise, moving with celerity, secrecy, and scientific precision, turned on Calais and surprised it (January 8, 1558). For the English, believing the place to be impregnable, had been accustomed to leave but a small garrison there through the winter. Thus the work of Joan of Arc was at last completed. And the hero of Metz, adding this brilliant success to his laurels, was justly held by a grateful people to have atoned for his failure in Italy.

The news of the taking of Calais arrived opportunely for the King. In desperate straits for money, he had summoned an Assembly of Notables, and demanded a loan, to which exception was being taken, when the happy news drowned all opposition in an outburst of patriotic fervour.

Both France and Spain were financially exhausted, and needed peace. In September, 1558, negotiations were



Aug. Rischgatz.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI, QUEEN OF HENRI II.

From the painting by Clouet at Chantilly.

begun. In April was signed the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, which closed the period of the Italian wars. In conducting the negotiations France was seriously handicapped by the conflicting interests of Montmorency and the Guises. The latter, as Henri warned Montmorency, were eager to continue the war. It had brought them success, and so long as it lasted their rival could be kept in Philip's hands. That was a policy which did not appeal to Montmorency. He had always been an advocate of peace, he had proved his utter incapacity in war, and he had no desire to remain a prisoner. Henri, too, eager to regain the favourite on whom he relied, was not less anxious for a peace which Diane de Poitiers also recommended. Moreover, suggestions were thrown out for an alliance between France and Spain for the suppression of heresy. Mary Tudor had died, and Elizabeth had ascended the English throne. It seemed to Philip—that sombre and fanatical spirit—that, as the armed leader of Catholicism, to crush Protestantism which was fermenting in France, spreading in the Netherlands, and triumphing in Germany, England, and Scotland, would not only profit the cause of the orthodox Faith, but lead him, by another road, to that supremacy in Europe to which he, like his father, aspired. These considerations will, perhaps, explain all the provisions of the much-debated Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis.

France was allowed to retain Calais,* which she had won from England, and the three bishoprics—Metz, Toul, and Verdun—which she had taken from Germany. In Italy she gave up all that she had been fighting for since 1494—Savoy, Piedmont, Bugey, Bresse, Montferrat, Corsica, the Milanese—and Marienbourg, Thionville, Damvillers, Montmédy, and the county of Charolais, in the North. Such were the surrenders to which France con-

* If she paid 500,000 crowns within eight years.

sented in return for Saint Quentin, Ham, Le Catelet, Thérrouanne. These sacrifices were bitterly resented by soldiers like Monluc, Brissac, Guise. "Sire," cried the latter, "you give in one day what you could not lose in thirty years of reverses." "In an hour, by the stroke of a pen, three or four drops of ink blackened the fruits of all our splendid victories," wrote Brantôme. But for France there was this much of good in a treaty involving unnecessary concessions—that by withdrawing from Italy, recovering Calais, and securing the three bishoprics, she established herself as a compact and unified kingdom within her natural borders.

The treaty was sealed by two marriages. The sister of Henri II., Marguerite, was to marry the Duke of Savoy, Emmanuel-Philibert; Henri's daughter Elizabeth to espouse the King of Spain. The festivities with which the Court began to celebrate these alliances, and perhaps to disguise the surrenders of Cateau-Cambrésis, resulted in the death of Henri. In June, 1559, the lists were set in Paris near the Palais des Tournelles, at the foot of the Bastille. For three days Princes and lords tilted in the presence of the Court. At last the King, wearing the colours of his lady, the white and black of the widow Diane, called upon the Count of Montgomery to break a lance with him. The jousts met and skilfully broke their lances. But Montgomery failed to throw away the fragment of the broken weapon remaining in his hand, as the rule was. Carried on by the impetus of the charge, his lance pierced the visor of his King, and in a few days the Protestants of Europe hailed the death of the persecutor as the direct intervention of the Almighty. But it profited them little.

The rebuilding of the Louvre (1546-1581) in the style of the French Renaissance, carefully following the restrained proportions of classical buildings, was begun in

the last year of François I. Pierre Lescot was the architect; Jean Goujon, the most famous of the sculptors employed upon this famous building. Their work, in style and feeling, is exactly similar to the work of the Pléiade in contemporary literature, the classical odes and elegies in the classical language of Ronsard and Du Bellay. This new movement in literature cast aside the ballads and *chansons* of the Middle Ages as too facile for the high art and severe beauty of true Poesy, which, it was maintained, must be wrought in imitation of the masterpieces of Greek and Roman literature. It was a movement in accord with the spirit of an intellectual aristocracy, typical of the Renaissance movement, and far removed from the popular sympathy to which the *chansons* had appealed.

XVI

THE WARS OF RELIGION

A.D. 1559—1589

EUROPE was now to become the scene of the great struggle between Philip of Spain and Elizabeth of England, between Protestantism and Catholicism in its most militant mood. Whilst Elizabeth, "the woman," as Philip bitterly complained, "possessed of a hundred thousand devils," played with the statesmen of Europe and outwitted them all, France, passing under the rule of Henri's young sons, weakly and incapable of governing, lay at the mercy of contending factions, waiting on religious strife, and almost ceased to count in the international struggle. And whilst the Council of Trent, reconstituting Catholicism, prepared the way for a violent reaction against heresy in any form, in France the Lutherans were rapidly being replaced by the organized religious and political body of Calvinists.

Just as beneath the religious fervour of the Crusades there underlay the political and commercial idea of expansion in the East, and, beneath the horrible Albigensian massacres, the political idea of the unity of the North and South, so, in the not less horrible religious wars which were now to begin between Catholics and Calvinists, there was the conflict of political and social ideas.

Calvin at Geneva had proved himself no less intolerant than the Catholics. His system was not confined to

dogma ; it was social and political as well as moral. He founded both a religion and a State on a democratic but highly inquisitorial and intolerant basis. From about the year 1555 Lutheranism in France gave place almost entirely to Calvinism. Calvin was a Frenchman ; his doctrine appealed to all those who, resenting a despotic government, a corrupt Court, and a pompous and mystic religion administered by an aristocratic and indifferent clergy, sighed for a pure and simple Gospel, taught by ministers chosen by the people, in a State where the governed elected their own governors, and exacted from them the practice of the morality which they preached. The spectacle of such a Christian Commonwealth seemed to be presented to their longing gaze across the border at Geneva. In fact, however, as the inspired head of a revealed religion, Calvin from Geneva affirmed the principle of authority, and exacted a submission no less blind and absolute than the Pope himself.

Throughout his reign, Henri II. had opposed the spread of the Reformation. But the Reformers, who had hitherto been drawn mainly from the ranks of the lower middle classes, now began to count among their converts men and women of social and political importance, and to develop an organization.

The new King, François II., was an ailing lad of fifteen. He was completely under the influence of the lively and attractive girl-Queen, whom he had married the year before. Mary Stuart, now, at the age of seventeen, in the full exercise of her rare personal charm, her wit, her gaiety, and her beauty, threw herself heedlessly into the life and pleasures of the brilliant French Court. Surrounded by poets, artists, men of science, and men of pleasure, who held the cup of enjoyment brimming to her sensuous lips, she thought there could be no better plan than for her feeble husband to cast the cares of State upon the

shoulders of her haughty and powerful uncles—the great soldier, François, Duc de Guise, and the ambitious bigot, Charles, Cardinal de Lorraine.* The support of the Queen-mother, whose ambition no one yet suspected, was easily secured by the Guises. They sacrificed to her vengeance Diane de Poitiers. At last Catherine de' Medici was able to turn upon the rival whom she had been obliged to endure for the whole of her married life. She compelled Diane to quit Paris, to give up all the jewels of the Crown, and to accept Chaumont instead of the exquisite château of Chenonceaux, which Catherine coveted. The aged Constable, Montmorency, was then dismissed. He joined the Huguenots, as the Protestants were called, with whom indeed many nobles and soldiers, offended by the haughty manners and sole dominion of the Guises, now threw in their lot.

And thus, just at the time when the persecution of the Protestants became more savage, their numbers were increased by the accession of many men of a class and temper not likely to submit to the stake with the Christian humility and enthusiasm that had characterized the first martyrs. The Huguenots became, therefore, more and more a political party, and were committed to all those acts of violence and intrigue to which a persecuted opposition is so often driven. They counted amongst their leaders the three Coligny brothers, of whom the Admiral Coligny stands out as perhaps the noblest figure in these stormy times, and the Princes of the Blood—Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre, and his brother, Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, whose place as advisers of the King had been usurped by the Guises. A meeting was held at Nantes in February, 1560, of Protestants from all parts of the country. They declared themselves

* The House of Guise was a younger branch of the Ducal House of Lorraine.

the representatives of the people, and a plot was formed to seize the Guises, and to demand from the King the reformation of Church and State. The Court was travelling from Blois to Amboise, when information of the scheme reached the ears of the Guises. Incredulous at first, they presently cut short their journey, and shut themselves up with the King in the strong castle of Amboise.

Thus well prepared, the Duke of Guise laid his plans with great skill. He wished to draw on his enemies to commit themselves. It had been arranged that a combined attack should be made upon the castle on March 16 by various bands of conspirators converging from the neighbourhood. It was made, but failed, for traitors in the camp had kept the Duke acquainted with each step in the plot. Then the Guises took the offensive. The woods were scoured. Swarms of cavalry were sent in pursuit, and brought back troops of prisoners. The Duke of Guise had promised pardon to all conspirators who returned peaceably to their houses (March 17). But the number of the prisoners, and their defence, for all declared their loyalty to the King, and that their grievance was against his Ministers, caused him to change his tactics to a course of bloody revenge. The prisoners were either executed on the spot, or thrown into the Loire in sacks. The castle battlements were crowned with the heads of the victims. And the King and Queen and Ladies of the Court found amusement in watching these scenes of blood.

But the Guises could not be content unless they struck down the leaders of the movement. The Prince de Condé alone was implicated by confessions wrung from the lips of prisoners by torture. The Prince proudly claimed the right to clear himself of suspicion. A Court was held, and Condé, disdaining to defend himself except as a

knight, challenged his accuser to appear and prove in single combat which of the twain was traitor. Guise arose, but not to accept the challenge. He proposed himself as the Prince's second, should anyone dare to take up the gauntlet so gallantly flung down.

In truth, the violence of Amboise had caused something of a reaction against the favourites, and this was the moment skilfully chosen by Catherine de' Medici to begin to assert herself. She appointed Michel de l'Hôpital Chancellor, and coquetted with a policy of compromise and reconciliation. Thus encouraged, at an Assembly of Notables held at Fontainebleau, Coligny and the Protestant leaders boldly demanded toleration, and the summoning of the States General. It was, indeed, decided to summon them. But the boldness of the Protestants on this occasion and the intrigues of the Bourbons, who attempted to seize Lyons and convert it into a stronghold of rebellion, induced Catherine to join hands with the Guises, and to return to a policy of violence. Reinforced by troops set free through the failure of Catholicism in Scotland (Treaty of Edinburgh, 1560), Guise massed troops in Orleans, where the States General had been summoned to meet. The King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé were summoned to attend.

To refuse was to declare war. Navarre, always anxious for his kingdom, and never willing to fight in the open, yielded, much to the indignation and disgust of the Reformers. The Bourbons entered the armed camp of the Catholics. Condé was at once arrested. He had been condemned to death when the King fell mortally ill. The future King, Charles IX., was but ten years old. Catherine used the occasion with a terrible coolness. Intelligent, energetic, endowed with all the artistic tastes, political ability and unscrupulousness of the Italian despots from whom she sprang, this extraordinary

woman, at the age of forty-one, emerged from the rôle of complaisant wife and devoted mother, and won her way, as Regent, to the sole direction of affairs. For, as the price of his own life and that of his brother, she induced the King of Navarre to forgo his claim, as first Prince of the Blood, to the coming Regency. The Guises fell from power, and Mary Stuart, her reign over, bade adieu to the dear land of France she would never see again (December, 1560).

In the new Assembly which Catherine had to meet, the three Orders, elected separately, deliberated separately. All were agreed as to the need of reform in the administration of the State, and of lowering the taxes, though the Treasury was immensely in debt. But as to reform of the Church or freedom of conscience they were pretty equally divided. The States were prorogued January, 1561, and an ordinance was issued granting some of their demands, which was soon revoked. But what was of more importance, Catherine and her Chancellor, l'Hôpital, declared themselves for a policy of toleration, and made an effort to heal the sores of the kingdom by this remedy. Unhappily, the remedy provoked a worse outbreak of the disease. The Protestants demanded liberty of worship as well as liberty of conscience. The horrified Catholics replied by sanctioning the Order of Jesuits, founded by Loyola for the defence of the Faith, and regarded hitherto with suspicion, owing to its Spanish origin and its vow of absolute obedience to the Pope. Guise, reconciling himself to his enemies, formed a "Triumvirate" with the Constable de Montmorency, and the Marshal Saint-André, and sought the aid of Philip of Spain in defence of the Catholic religion. Navarre, anxious for his kingdom, joined them.

Under the régime of tolerance, the Protestants had enormously increased in numbers—some said that they in-

cluded a quarter of the kingdom. Catherine seems to have thought that they were the party of the future, and, being swayed more by political considerations than religious passion, she decided to encourage them. In January, 1562, a decree was passed permitting them to worship outside the walls of a town—a "Five-Mile Act," which amounted, comparatively, to a charter of liberty.

On a Sunday in March the Duke of Guise was passing through the little town of Vassy when he heard that the Huguenots were worshipping in a barn within sound of the church. He approached to rebuke them, and was received with a volley of stones. His escort turned upon the assailants, and slew or wounded the greater part of the congregation. The Catholics celebrated this massacre as a victory. The Huguenots, with Condé and the Admiral Coligny at their head, flew to arms, demanding justice. Guise seized the Queen-mother and King, and carried them to Catholic Paris. Catherine, compelled to give up all hope of compromise, wept with rage, and stood forth as the leader of the Catholics, since they held her captive. So began the war which was to deluge France with blood for over thirty years.

Whilst Philip of Spain helped the Catholics, Elizabeth of England sent aid to Condé.

The first stage of this war, in which each sect strove to exterminate the other, was brought to a close by the Battle of Dreux (December, 1562), when Condé, having taken Montmorency prisoner, was himself made captive by Guise, and by the murder of Guise by a Huguenot fanatic, named Poltrot de Méré, when he was besieging Orleans in the following February. Coligny, whom the Guises always regarded as the instigator of this murder, was probably innocent, but he acclaimed the event as a manifestation of the love of God for his Church. Catherine, now head of the Catholic party, whose strength and popu-

larity were clear to her, made peace with Condé (March, 1563). The Edict of Amboise granted full liberty of worship to the Protestants within the towns which they held at that time, but otherwise gave greater freedom of conscience to the nobles and gentry than to the *bourgeois* and peasant. It was regarded by many Huguenots, therefore, as a betrayal of their interests, whilst the Pope denounced it as a shameful surrender.

Catherine endeavoured to maintain peace by enhancing the prestige of the King, who had now reached his majority, and by charming the discontented nobles with the attractions of a gay and brilliant Court, and the seductions of her "flying squadron" of beautiful maids of honour. Condé himself fell a victim for a while to such snares.

But so artificial a calm could not be long maintained. The Protestants, goaded by resentment at the curtailment of their promised and past privileges through a series of edicts, and by distrust of troops raised by the Court on flimsy pretext, resorted once more to arms. Led by Coligny, they made an attempt in September, 1567, to seize the person of the King by surprise at Meaux. They failed. But priests were butchered in the South, and a demand was raised for the summoning of the States General. Paris was besieged. The Constable de Montmorency was killed in a skirmish at St. Denis. But the Protestants could not sustain the war. In March, 1568, the Peace of Longjumeau renewed the Edict of Amboise.

But the attempt at Meaux had ruined the cause of toleration. Michel de l'Hôpital, who had always supported it, fell from power.

It is thought that both Philip of Spain and Catherine, when driven to abandon her policy of tolerance, had for some time instilled into the mind of the young King the idea, not hard to believe in face of the attitude

of the Huguenots, that the safety of the Crown depended upon the success of Catholicism. The power of the Duke of Lorraine, representing the extreme Catholic reaction, was re-established. His protégé, the Duke of Anjou, Catherine's favourite son, took the field when, a few months after the Peace of Longjumeau, resort was had once more to arms. In a battle at Jarnac (March, 1569), Condé paid for his courage with his life. The loss of their brave leader, who represented also the protest of the Royal Blood against the King's advisers, might well have proved fatal to the cause of the Protestants had not the Queen of Navarre brought to their camp her young son, Henri of Béarn (the future Henri IV.), and Louis II. de Bourbon, the young Prince of Condé. The presence of these lads, as the pages of Admiral Coligny, put new heart into the Huguenots. Yet again they were defeated, at Moncontour (October, 1569), and still their resistance continued as stubborn and implacable as ever. At La Rochelle, in Provence, Languedoc, and Béarn, Catherine saw the party, which such victories had promised to crush, raise its head undiminished, bloody, but not bowed. She returned to her old policy of conciliation. The House of Lorraine and the Catholic zealots were disgraced. By the Peace of St.-Germain (August 8, 1570), the Protestants were granted liberty of worship in the suburbs of two towns in each province, and in all places where the reformed religion had been established before the war. Was this peace, to be violated so soon and so terribly, a mere trap to secure the disarmament of the Huguenots, in order to their extermination? The theory has been advanced by the panegyrists of Catherine's Machiavellian wisdom. Nothing but the event is in favour of this view. In pursuance, it seems, of the more statesmanlike policy of peace and toleration, Catherine tried to form Protestant alliances by marrying the Duke of Anjou to Elizabeth

of England, and Marguerite de Valois* to Henri of Navarre. Meantime, Admiral Coligny was received with favour at Court, and Charles IX., asserting his ambition to be freed of his mother's apron-strings, was induced to favour the idea of intervening on behalf of the Protestants of the Low Countries against Philip of Spain. To secure domestic peace by using the energies of his Protestant followers to enlarge the boundaries of France through the acquisition of the Spanish Netherlands, or by colonization in America, was a scheme eminently worthy of the steadfast purpose and patriotic spirit of Coligny. But the King was weak and impulsive; the Catholic extremists would have preferred the success of Spain to that of the Huguenots, and Catherine feared the might of Spain. Yet the determination of Coligny was fixed. His influence over Charles was so great that, in spite of the opposition of Catherine and the Council, he obliged him to commit himself more and more to the policy of supporting the Prince of Orange and the Huguenots in the Netherlands. Such success, in opposition to such a woman, was the signing of his own death-warrant. A few days later, after consultation with the Guises and the Duke of Anjou, she arranged with Madame de Nemours that Coligny should be assassinated. The plot miscarried, for he was only wounded (August 22, 1572). The King was furious, and insisted that justice should be done. Paris was full of Huguenots—gentlemen who had come to celebrate the nuptials of Catherine's unwilling daughter and the King of Navarre. They demanded justice, and threatened to exact it. The complicity of the Guises was suspected. Civil war seemed once more inevitable. The position of Catherine, if her guilt were revealed, would be fatally compromised. She determined to hide her guilt, and to

* The King's third sister. She had given her love to the young Duke of Guise.

destroy the power of the Huguenots at one blow by a general massacre of the Protestants and their leaders. In conjunction with Henri, Duke of Anjou, the Queen-mother played upon the fears of the wretched King. He had proclaimed his loyalty to Coligny. She warned him that the Protestants were arming in the city, reminded him that it was Coligny who had made the attempt to seize him at Meaux.

With cunning boldness she confessed that she and Henri were implicated in the attempt upon the Admiral's life, and added that the Huguenots, aware of this, were preparing to take a terrible revenge upon the King and Court. The Admiral must be killed, and the other Protestant leaders. In an access of rage and terror the wretched King gave his consent. "Kill all the Huguenots in France," he cried at last, "that there may not be one left to reproach me." His orders were readily obeyed. The dawn of St. Bartholomew's Day (August 24) was greeted by the ringing of all the church bells in Paris. The Duke of Guise and his followers beset the house where the wounded Coligny lay, and despatched him. And throughout the city, in the Louvre itself, the murderous work went on; all through that night, all through the week, the horrible butchery of men and women of all ages continued. Hardly were the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé themselves spared. The King granted them their lives only on condition that they changed their religion. And the massacre, begun by the maddened Catholics in Paris, was pursued in the Provinces with a bloodthirstiness not less shocking. Between 20,000 and 100,000 Protestants—the numbers are naturally uncertain—thus met their deaths.

A solemn service of thanksgiving was held at St. Peter's, at Rome, for this "great victory of the Church." But the victory was not so great as had appeared. Paralyzed

for a moment, the Huguenots rallied. La Rochelle successfully sustained a siege. The Duke of Anjou, chosen King of Poland, could no longer wage war against the Protestants. A treaty was made, granting liberty of worship to Nîmes, Montauban, and La Rochelle (July, 1573). The destruction of the Huguenot leaders had left Catherine face to face with the people. They knew no compromise, and were beyond the reach of her diplomacy. And these steadfast Protestants were now reinforced by a growing party of Moderates—*Politiques*, as they were called—liberal-minded Catholics, who were disgusted by the atrocities of St. Bartholomew's Day, and desired the establishment of order through religious tolerance. They espoused, in fact, the policy which Catherine had deserted. Her violence, by stimulating this moderate party, actually helped to bring about the final settlement of this long, disastrous struggle.

Charles IX. had died in 1574, his last hours haunted, and his end perhaps hastened, by the vision of the horrors he had witnessed and promoted, but for which his mother was really responsible. He was succeeded by Catherine's favourite son, Henri III., the most contemptible of all her vicious brood. Well-meaning, indeed, cultivated and voluble, but weak, effeminate, perverted, this degenerate man-Queen, or woman-King — men doubted which to dub him—with his painted face, his female airs and finery, and his company of lapdogs and handsome youths, his *mignons*, was a fit conclusion to the tainted race of Valois joined to the blood of Medici. Devout in the intervals of debauchery, he placed himself at the head of the Catholic extremists.

Henri of Navarre, a man so different, so courageous, quick of brain, and virile, escaped from his detention at Paris during a hunting-party at the beginning of 1576. He resumed the Protestant faith, and his adherents flocked

to the "White Plume" he wore so gallantly upon the field of battle. In concert with the Duke of Alençon, heir to the throne, who was the leader of the *Politiques*, they soon wrung from Henri "the Peace of Monsieur"* (May, 1576). The Reformers were granted full liberty of worship everywhere, except in Paris.

So great a concession roused the Catholic zealots to fury. A Holy League of irreconcilables was formed, bound to spare neither friend nor foe till the hated heresy was extirpated. The Pope and Philip of Spain applauded their determination, and promised them support, whilst at home the Catholic Parisians found in Henri of Guise, a leader capable of stirring them to the wildest enthusiasm. In him they saw a possible successor to the throne in place of the hated Protestant, Henri of Navarre. For Henri III. was childless, and the Duke d'Alençon might die, as he did in 1584.

The Estates met at Blois (1576), and an interdict was laid upon the Protestant religion. Once more the Huguenots sprang to arms. With unflagging cheerfulness, unceasing courage, unfailing skill, Henri of Navarre, called Balafre, for he bore the scars of battle on his face, led the followers of the White Plume against the heavy odds of the fanatical Ligue, backed by Spain and Rome. So for years he maintained the unequal fight, sharing the hardships of the campaigns with his followers, and rewarded by small successes, and at last, in 1587, by one great victory at Coutras. On the other side, the feebleness and failure of the King only served to heighten the popularity of Guise, who had gained some slight successes on the frontier, and followed them up with ruthless energy. The Ligueurs exploited the emotion felt by the Catholics at the news of the execution of Mary Stuart. In defiance of the King's orders, Guise entered Paris, and was received

* The title of the King's eldest brother.

with enthusiasm by the populace. The train was laid; the match was set to it by the appearance of some Swiss soldiers whom Henri III. introduced in order to overawe the citizens. The mob flew to arms. Barri- cades were erected in the streets, isolating the Swiss pickets. The Royal troops were attacked, and would have been overwhelmed had not Henri appealed to Guise to save them. "The King of Paris" responded gallantly, whilst the King of France fled to Chartres (May, 1588). He now signed the Edict of the Union, in which he completely capitulated to the League. Granting an amnesty to Paris, he swore to banish heresy from the kingdom, and bade his subjects swear that they would never accept as King a heretic, or one that favoured heretics. He appointed the Duke of Guise Lieutenant-General. The States General met at Blois in October. They soon showed that the influence of Guise was supreme with them, and showed it by humiliating the King still further. It was not without provocation, then, that the galled, neurotic creature determined to rid himself of this insolent Duke.

Guise received several warnings. "He would not dare," was his contemptuous reply. On December 23 he was struck down and done to death in the presence of the King. Next day his brother, the Cardinal, was killed, and several members of the States General were arrested. "Mother," said the King to Catherine, who lay on her death-bed in this appropriate atmosphere of blood, "I am King again." "God grant you have not made yourself King of nothing," replied that wise woman. Henri thought that by killing Guise he had crushed the League. In fact, seeing now that a Protestant was heir to the throne, and that its occupant was opposed to them, the bigoted Catholics of Paris became frankly revolutionary, anti-monarchical, and anti-national.

The Duke of Mayenne, the brother of the murdered Guise, was elected Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. Henri was excommunicated by the Pope. Nothing was wanting but a formal deposition of the King, when, in despair, he turned to his cousin, Henri of Navarre, for aid. Royalists and Huguenots joined forces and marched upon Paris, and laid siege to the headquarters of the League. For it was clear to Navarre that the success of the League meant his own exclusion from the throne, and the prolongation of civil and religious war. Within Paris a Council of Sixteen was set up, a sort of Committee of Public Safety, which sought, by means of terrorism, to assert its authority throughout France. Without the walls, these curious democrats called in the aid of Spain, whilst a fanatic monk, Jacques Clément, under pretence of presenting a letter to him, stabbed to death the King who had betrayed Catholicism. So died Henri III., naming as his successor Henri of Navarre (August, 1589).

XVII

HENRI IV.

A.D. 1589—1610

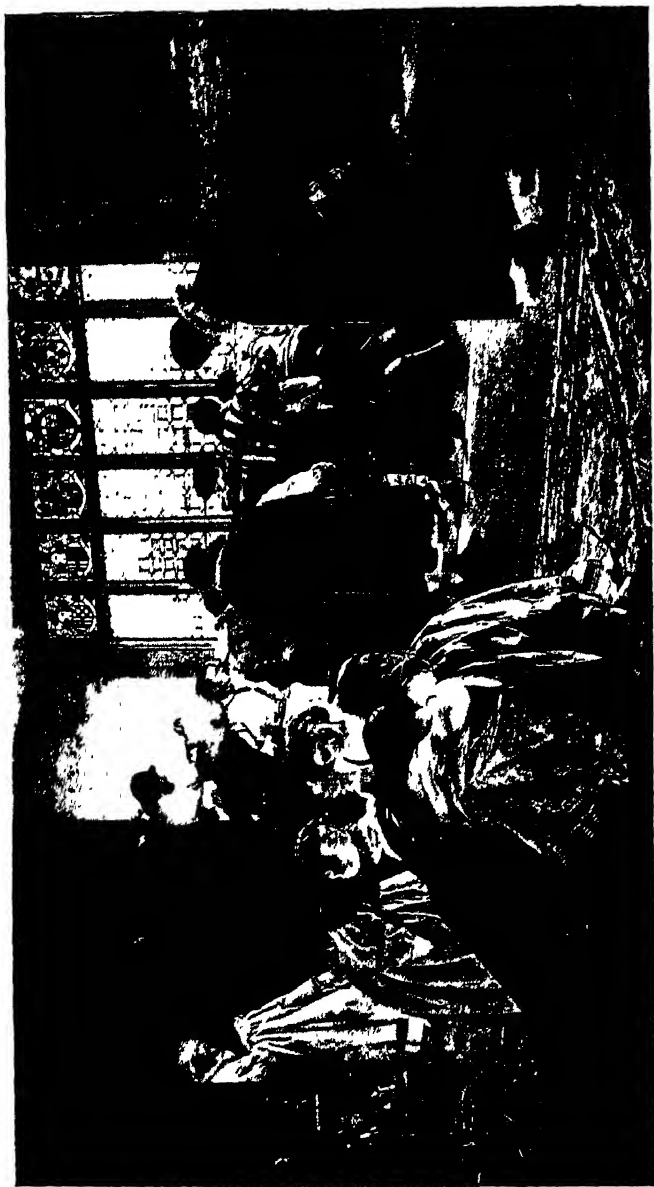
A KING in the prime of life, hardy, affable, gallant, with a sane mind in a sane body, had come to replace the diseased and degenerate Valois stock. But the first of the Bourbons* must win his way to the throne as a soldier. All the large towns still clung to the League. Henri could not attempt to take Paris. After an indecisive campaign in Normandy, where Mayenne besieged him at Arques, he fixed his headquarters at Tours. He proved his energy by a winter campaign, which placed Normandy in his hands. Mayenne was compelled to action by the clamour of the Parisians. Reinforced by some troops sent by the Duke of Parma, for Philip of Spain had openly joined the Leaguers and called upon all Catholic Princes to extirpate the heretics, he marched to the relief of Dreux, which Henri was besieging. The King, though his army was largely outnumbered, determined to force a decisive engagement. He could not afford delay. For money was scarce, and his soldiers a motley crowd of English, French, Germans, and Swiss. He chose his battle-ground between Anet and Ivry, on the banks of the Eure. At first victory seemed to declare for the Catholics. Then Henri turned to his followers. "Comrades," he cried, "God is for us. There are His

* See Appendix.

enemies and ours. Here is your King! At them! If your ensign fails you, rally round my white plume; you will find it in the path of victory and honour." The famous speech was as characteristic as true. After a desperate hand-to-hand fight, the enemy fled. Henri himself pursued Mayenne to the very gates of Mantes (March 14, 1590).

In May he invested Paris. It was impossible, with his small army of 12,000 men, to assault a city which could boast a garrison of 50,000, and was so fired with warlike religious enthusiasm that even the monks formed themselves into regiments for the defence. Henri therefore decided to reduce the capital by famine. But for four months Paris held out, existing on one month's provisions. Henri showed both his humanity and his political wisdom in allowing some six thousand starving poor to escape. "Paris must not become a graveyard," he said. "I do not wish to reign over the dead." The same moderation had always distinguished him in the hour of victory. After Coutras he had treated his prisoners with kindness, and only demanded the re-enactment of the Edict of 1577. At Ivry he had urged his men to spare the French nobility. He never forgot that his foes were one day to be his subjects. But the siege cost the lives of some 50,000 persons. So desperate was the position that Paris was on the point of yielding when the Duke of Parma with his Spanish soldiers entered France, and, drawing off Henri's army, enabled the place to be revictualled.

The siege and its relief made two things clear. First, to Henri, that in the face of such intense fanaticism he could never reign, as Henri III. had warned him with his dying breath, except as a Catholic; secondly, to patriotic Catholics, that their resistance must depend upon foreign aid. The more fanatical, indeed, were willing, upon the



Aug. Raschigitz.

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THE ENGLISH EMBASSY IN PARIS ON THE DAY OF THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW (1572).

From the painting by P. H. Calderon, A.R.A.

death of “Charles X.” (1590), to entertain the pretensions of Philip, to set aside the Salic law, the prophylactic of French patriotism, and to recognize the Infanta of Spain as the Queen of France. On every side, in fact, claimants appeared to the vacant Catholic throne, and on every frontier foreign vultures gathered to devour the carcass of the expiring kingdom. To a man with the broad mind and deep patriotism of Henri of Navarre, it became obvious that the only way to save the realm was for him to turn Catholic and to secure toleration for the Protestants. He took that step of supreme political wisdom and courage. On May 16, 1593, he announced his intention of abjuring his religion. “Paris,” he said, in one of those striking phrases which endeared him to a people ever susceptible to an epigram, “was well worth a Mass.” And in gaining Paris, which received him with the wildest enthusiasm, he had gained France. Since Rheims was in the hands of Guise, he chose to be consecrated at that other great Catholic shrine, Chartres (February 27, 1594).

If the League had failed, Catholicism had won. And with it the Monarchy. The Parisian revolutionists, the democrats of town and country with whom Guise had intrigued, had been discredited by their failure and by their alliances with the foreigner. The monarchy under Henri IV. was once again revealed as the symbol of French unity and patriotism, and, as it seemed, the only possible form of strong centralized administration. And this, rather than constitutional government, was always the thing dearest to the heart of the French people.

Henri at once set himself to restore the unity and prosperity of the country by a policy of pacification, of financial reform, and of opposition to the foreigner. The extremists still regarded him with suspicion; and of the extremists none were more suspect than the company of

Jesuits, whose Spanish origin, their absolute devotion to Rome, and their wealth alike rendered them obnoxious to the Gallicans. Two attempts to assassinate Henri were made by men who were proved to have been instigated by the regicide doctrines taught by the Jesuits. The Society was banished from France as "corruptors of youth, disturbers of the public peace, and enemies of the King and State" (1595).

Henri received absolution from the Pope in September, 1595. In the beginning of this year, when he was sure of being reconciled to the Holy See, he had decided to change the civil war into a national one by declaring war against Spain, and driving the foreigner out of France. In spite of his vigour and personal valour, he met with reverses at the hands of the Spaniards and Ligueurs. But the Ligueurs were rapidly coming over to his side. In October Mayenne made his submission. Provence, too, was pacified. And though the next two years saw the Spaniards still successful in the field, their success in seizing Calais threw Elizabeth upon his side. By a great effort Henri recaptured Amiens, then found himself without money and without men. Luckily Spain also was at the end of her resources, and if she gained successes, it was none the less clear that she could not conquer France. The Pope intervened. He could not view with equanimity these two Catholic Powers exhausting each other in the presence of the prosperous Protestant countries. Henri threw over his Dutch and English allies, and a peace was signed at Vervins, May, 1598, which renewed that of Cateau-Cambr sis.

The Treaty of Vervins marked the beginning of the decline of Spain, of the failure of Philip's ideal of universal empire, in face of French resistance and English seamanship. It was preceded by a few weeks by the Peace of Nantes, which marks the end of the Wars of Religion and

the beginning of an era of toleration. The Edict of Nantes, signed by Henri, April 13, 1598, was a charter of the rights of Protestants to freedom' of conscience.



HENRI OF BÉARN, KING OF NAVARRE.

(From a drawing in the Bibliothèque Nationale.)

They were granted liberty of public worship in two places in every *baillage* or *sénéchaussée*, and in all places where it already existed. Full civil rights were granted

to all Protestants, and, as a guarantee, they were allowed to retain complete control of the 200 cities which they still held.

It was, said the Pope, the most accursed edict imaginable.

And now that peace was restored, Henri turned to the no less difficult task of curing the ruin and desolation which France had suffered from the wars and massacres perpetrated in the name of religion. The Minister whom he chose to help him in this endeavour was a man of strong sense, sound business instincts, and a soldier of high courage—a Protestant named Maximilian de Bethune, afterwards Duke of Sully. Sully, says M. Duruy happily, was neither a Colbert nor a Bayard, but he had some of the qualities of both. As Superintendent of the Finances, by reorganizing the methods of collecting the taxes and checking the accounts, he put an end to speculation, and produced order out of the most terrible chaos. His measures were not heroic; though he encouraged agriculture by wise measures, he had not the clear vision to perceive, like his royal master, the importance of commerce and manufactures; but, as the result of fifteen years of honest and capable administration, he could point to a reserve of millions stored in the cellars of the Bastille, in place of a bankrupt treasury.

Henri's saying that he wished every peasant to have a fowl in his pot on Sundays was typical of the humanity and *bonhomie* of the man, but he did not attempt to hasten the realization of his ideal by curtailing the extravagance of his Court. The reign of the Mignons was succeeded by that of a series of mistresses. But they were never allowed to influence him in affairs. Queen Margot had not atoned to her unwilling mate by presenting him with an heir. Henri was glad to rid himself by a divorce from that dissolute woman. He then married

Marie de' Medici, who became the mother of Louis XIII.

Constitutionally, Henri was to be satisfied with nothing less than absolute sovereignty. He reduced the Council, which under the last Valois had been open to Princes of the Blood, Cardinals, Bishops, Grands Seigneurs, and favourites, to a select body of twelve men chosen for their ability. He quickly forgot his promise to summon the States General. Nor did the people, contented with the prudent administration of Sully, raise any great outcry.

Neither this absolutism, nor the pacification of the country, was achieved in a day. There were Protestants and Catholics alike among the malcontents, Protestants who would be content with nothing less than the republicanism of Calvin, Catholics imbued with the doctrines of the Jesuits, or nobles determined to revive the influence of their Order. The *gens d'épée* were ill-pleased to see the power of the State passing from their hands, and being transferred to the officers of the King, the *gens de robe*. The nobles, indeed, impoverished and demoralized by the events of the last century, tended to leave their lands, and to depend more and more upon the patronage of the Court. It was a tendency which could not but increase the latent hostility of the peasants towards their lords—hostility which occasionally broke out into actual violent demonstrations of revolt. The great nobles, on the other hand, approached Henri with a proposal that the present Governors of Provinces should be allowed to hold them in fief, and transmit them to their descendants. It was to renew the feudal system. Henri angrily refused. Not that it was his way to be angry or severe, save in extremities. He won over many by his frank and amiable leniency. Typical of his temper was his reception of the Duke of Mayenne, when he came to offer his submission in 1596. Engaging him in conversation, he walked rapidly

up and down the garden in the heat. The fat Duke puffed and panted after his athletic King. "It is the only revenge I ever mean to take for your disloyalty," laughed Henri.

But some malcontents were irreconcilable. Amongst them was the Marshal de Biron, an old comrade in arms, who had tried both religions, and discarded them in favour of astrology—a man of morbid vanity, ambition, and jealousy. Flattered by the Spaniards, tempted by the promise of Burgundy as his reward, recognized as the leader of the Catholic malcontents, he entered into traitorous agreements with the Duke of Savoy, and, when Henri made war on that Prince, he endeavoured to compass the death of the King by leading him within range of the enemy's guns during the siege of the Fort St. Catherine. Henri, aware of his intrigues, made every effort to induce him to confess his treachery and to renew his loyalty. But Biron persisted in his treason. He was arrested, tried before the *Parlement*, and beheaded. In this treason, both Henri's mistress, Henriette d'Entragues, and her half-brother, the Comte d'Auvergne, a bastard of Charles IX., were concerned.

After the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées (1599), to whom he was passionately devoted, and before he married Marie de' Medici, Henri had fallen violently in love with Henriette. Before yielding to her royal lover, she had extorted a written promise from him that, if she had a son within the year, he would marry her. Her child was still-born. But a second, a son, had been born about the same time as the Dauphin. It would seem that the Entragues were anxious to get rid of Henri, and to push the claims of their descendant. Henri, however, contented himself with punishing Biron, and forgave the Count of Auvergne. But the Entragues renewed their treasonable plotting with the Spaniards. They were

seized, tried, and condemned to death. So enamoured, however, was Henri that he forgave his mistress, and, after withdrawing the famous written promise, commuted the sentence of Auvergne to imprisonment in the Bastille (1605).

Writing in his old age, and in the light of Richelieu's achievements, Sully* ascribed to Henry IV. the conception of a "Great Design," which has been taken *au sérieux* by many historians, and has prompted the praise its author intended. Henri is credited, shortly after the Peace of Vervins, with having arranged with Elizabeth of England to "liberate" Christian Europe, and to organize therein fifteen States, in which free and public worship should be allowed to Catholicism, the Augsburg Confession, and Calvinism. Any differences between these States were to be settled by periodical Congresses. Christianity, thus at last assured of perpetual peace, was to join forces to expel the Turk from Europe. The Great Design is the afterthought of an imaginative hero-worshipper. Henri was prudent, practical, pacific, concerned with the immediate necessity rather than the vague ideal, with prompt results rather than distant possibilities. But if we cannot credit such a man with the imaginative policy of the Great Design, yet his diplomacy was certainly directed towards the accomplishment of the true policy of France.

The tide of Catholic reaction was flowing strong. And though Holland, like England, had successfully resisted Spain hitherto, Philip, allied with Austria, and supported by the Papacy, promised to crush Protestantism on the Continent, and to establish once more a Hapsburg supremacy in Europe. Henri IV. saw clearly enough that the policy of France must be that which she had pursued, somewhat blindly, it is true, up to the time

* *Économies Royales*.

of the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis. Against Philip, as against Charles V., she must strive to maintain the balance of power, to check the power of Vienna and Madrid, to insure the liberty of the United Provinces and the States of the Empire, and incidentally to save Protestantism from the advancing might of the Jesuits.* To this end Henri had allied himself with England, when the dagger of an assassin reached home at last.

The Court of the Very Christian King resembled too much the harem of the Grand Turk. To save his bride, the young and lovely Charlotte de Montmorency, from the lascivious advances of the King, the young Prince of Condé had fled from the Court, and placed his wife under the protection of the Archduke Albert, Sovereign of the Low Countries under the suzerainty of the King of Spain. Piqued by this innocent abduction, Henri foolishly demanded her restoration, which was correctly refused by the Court of Brussels. He threatened war, and the cry was raised that Europe was about to be deluged in blood for another Helen.

War which could be assigned to such a cause, or for which the pretext was to put the Protestant claimants into the heritage of Zülich-Cleves, could not be popular with the country, much less with the Catholic extremists. At last one of the fanatics, excited by the teaching of the Jesuits, struck home. François Ravallac stabbed Henri to death as he was driving in the streets of Paris. It was the last of a long series of attempts upon his life. The utter despair and grief with which his people received the news of his death was at once testimony to the greatness of the achievements of this most national of Kings in the

* Henri had allowed them to return to France in 1603. From that moment, with unceasing cleverness and zeal, they forwarded the ultramontane propaganda, striving against the spirit of Gallicanism to establish the doctrine of pontifical supremacy, spiritual and temporal.

cause of France, and no exaggerated foreboding of the irretrievable disaster this calamity was to entail (May 14, 1610). In a moment men remembered the horrors of the League, and contrasted the peace and good order of 1610 with the bloodshed and ruin of 1589. And they saw how bright the sun had been when they looked backward into the darkness and forward into gloom. France, driven from her course like a rudderless ship, disappeared from the sea of foreign politics for half a generation. Europe plunged into the Thirty Years' War.

XVIII

THE RULE OF RICHELIEU

(LOUIS XIII., A.D. 1610—1643)

LOUIS XIII. was but nine years old. Preparing to invade Navarre, Henri had appointed the Queen-mother to act as Regent in his absence. She was able, therefore, upon his death to assume that position with little difficulty. Once more the House of Florentine bankers was to rule France. But Marie de' Medici had little of the energy or ability of Catherine. She was a commonplace, self-indulgent woman of mediocre intelligence, bigoted in her religion, and easily controlled by favourites: the kind of woman most likely to be used and then tossed aside by a man of Richelieu's vigorous understanding and far-seeing ambition, which knew no such weakness as gratitude. At present, Marie was completely dominated by a low-born Italian adventuress, Leonora Galigai, who had accompanied her as a lady-in-waiting from Italy, and by her no less vulgar husband, Concini.

Sully was at once dismissed. The money with which he had so laboriously filled the Treasury was quickly dissipated in bribing discontented nobles, and in satisfying the hungry foreigners in Marie's suite. The war which Henri had projected against the House of Austria was hastily dropped, and a *rapprochement* negotiated with Spain, signalized by the marriage of Louis XIII. with the

Infanta, Anne of Austria, and of Elizabeth, Marie's daughter, with the heir-apparent of Spain. All claim to the Spanish throne was renounced, and a truce made for ten years (1615).

Louis XIII. attained his majority in October, 1614. At the same time the States General met in Paris. They had been summoned by the Queen-Regent.

For the demands of the nobles had increased as Marie's feeble Government yielded to their blackmail, and tried to buy their loyalty with governorships and pensions. The Prince of Condé, their leader, had taken up arms, and issued a manifesto, in which he accused the Court of having debased the nobility, taxed the poor, and ruined the country by profusion and prodigality—an amusing reproach, as Richelieu remarked, seeing that it was himself and his friends who had profited. In order to make some show of zeal for the public interests, he concluded his manifesto by the customary demand for the summoning of the States General. To this demand Marie acquiesced, whilst attempting to pacify Condé and his friends by further grants.

The States General of 1614 achieved nothing. But this Assembly is remarkable in French history. For it was destined to be the last Assembly held until the Revolution, when it was invoked as a precedent. And it was as a delegate of the clergy that the young Bishop of Luçon, Armand du Plessis de Richelieu, found his opportunity to enter public life.

The feeling of the Deputies, who numbered 140 clergy, 132 nobles, and 192 of the Third Estate, was at least unanimous in opposition to the ambitious cabals of the Princes of the Blood, Condé, Soissons, and the rest. The three Orders deliberated separately in the Augustine Monastery, and met together for royal audiences at the Hôtel de Bourbon. But their fundamental rivalry was soon

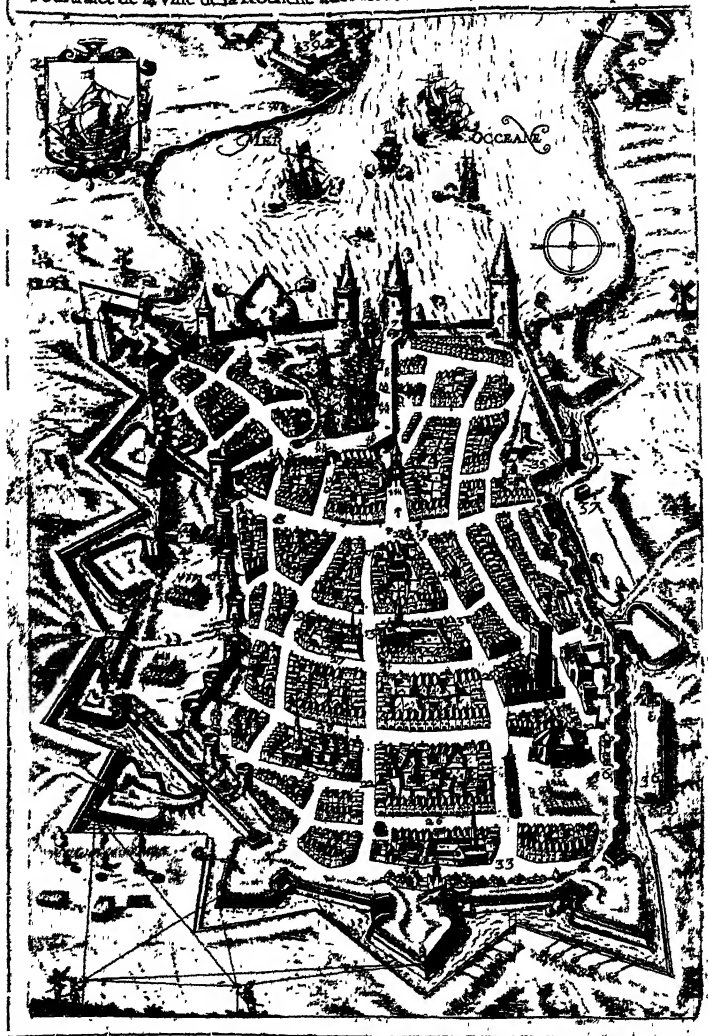
apparent. Peace, prosperity, commerce, had enriched the *bourgeoisie*. And it was the aristocracy of this class, a *noblesse de robe*, which had absorbed the offices of judicature and finance, and allied itself with the hereditary nobility, *noblesse de race*, which now entirely composed the Third Estate, formerly representative, to some extent at least, of the common people. This *noblesse de robe* had established its hereditary character by virtue of its money and the *paulette*.* *Parlement* had become a corporation of hereditary lawyers.

The high nobles, on the other hand, impoverished by the wars and by the depreciation in the purchasing power of money, caused by the gold-mines of America ("Spanish money"), were excluded by law and custom from repairing their fortunes through commerce. They were forced to marry the daughters of the rich *bourgeoisie*, whom they despised, and to support their expensive state by acquiring hereditary governorships and hereditary pensions.

Now the nobles clamoured for retrenchment and reform—that is to say, the abolition of the hereditary character and profits of the official class, by abolishing the *paulette*; the Third Estate retorted by demanding the abolition of the pensions of the nobles. As for the direct taxes, the nobles, clergy, and officials alike were exempt from them, and were only stirred by a sense of humanity to demand relief for the people. And their self-interest prevented them from combining to maintain the weapon of financial control. Accordingly, whilst the

* The system by which officials were allowed to nominate their successors, who paid a sort of succession duty to the Crown. It was so called from Charles Paulet, who farmed this source of revenue under Sully, by whom it was inaugurated. Thus offices, instead of being put up to sale, became hereditary, at a price, and a class was created which only a revolution could destroy (1604).

Fourtraict de la ville de la Rochelle avec ses forterefies, comme elle est à present.



A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF LA ROCHELLE AT THE TIME OF THE SIEGE OF 1627.

Pages 260-266.

The entrance to the basin for ships is defended by two towers, and there are fifteen others on the walls, and a dozen bastions in most instances constructed with retired flankers

From a print in the British Museum

Orders thus fell out, the Crown came by its own easily enough. The States were adjourned—till the Revolution. They had proved a failure as a means of obtaining or conducting constitutional government.

Richelieu, who had distinguished himself in the debate of the clergy, next appears as a Minister of the Queen-Regent, after the fall of Villeroy and the other old Ministers of Henri IV. That fall was brought about by the Treaty of Loudun (May, 1616).

For after the States General had been adjourned, the *Parlement* of Paris had taken a step which might well have been fraught with immense consequences. Raising a cry against the weakness of the Ministers and the extravagance of the foreign favourites, they came forward as the representatives of the people, and invited the Dukes and Peers to sit with them, to consider the public affairs of the State, and to complete the work which the States General had left undone (March, 1615). In reality, the legists and officials were terrified at the advice which had been offered to the King to abolish the *paulette*, and with it their hereditary position. It was that hereditary position, indeed, which had given them the power and independence they were now showing. They were encouraged by Condé. And though he pusillanimously acquiesced, when the Court forbade the Peers to join them, *Parlement* still asserted their right to take part in public affairs, and protested against the ultramontane policy and influences, as well as against all the abuses which cried for reform.

They concluded by threatening to name the advisers of the Crown, whom they held to be responsible for the disorders of the realm. Next day an edict was issued forbidding *Parlement* to meddle for the future with the affairs of State. And *Parlement* meekly apologized. The Princes—Bouillon, Longueville, Mayenne, and Condé—

on whose support they had relied, had left Paris. Marie summoned Condé to accompany her to the Spanish frontier, whither the Court was bound for the conclusion of the royal marriages. He refused, until the evils complained of by the Estates were remedied, and he named the advisers of the King, and chiefly Concini—now the Marshal d'Ancre—as responsible for them. He demanded the rejection of the Council of Trent, and was joined by the Protestants under the upright and generous Henri, Duc de Rohan. The King, who had raised two armies—one to watch the Princes, the other to escort him to his wedding—declared Condé and his accomplices rebels (September 10). Then, when the marriage had been celebrated at Bordeaux, Marie, yielding to the advice of Villeroy and Jeannin, made terms with the Princes and the Protestants (Loudun). Whilst refusing to acquiesce in all the demands of the Third Estate, she consented to deprive Ancre of Amiens, not to publish the Council of Trent, and to admit Condé to be Chief of the Council and to sign all decrees. The weakness shown by the Ministers in these negotiations led to their fall. Barbin and Mangot took their places. The former introduced Richelieu to Concini. He was appointed Secretary of State. We may, perhaps, trace to his influence a sudden ebullition of energy in Marie's weak and vacillating policy. Condé was arrested and sent to the Bastille. Three armies took the field to suppress the rebellious nobles who still chose to appeal to arms under the leadership of the Duke of Nevers. But Ministers, however energetic, could avail little so long as they were the creatures of the hated and presumptuous Italian favourite. For the removal of Condé had left the field open to the ambition of Concini. The moment was ripe for Louis XIII. to assert himself, and chase the foreigners from his Court. He was now fifteen, but Marie and Concini had sedulously excluded

him from public affairs. They encouraged his love of falconry, and gave him for companion a Provençal gentleman, Charles d'Albert de Luynes, well skilled in that art, and wrongly supposed to be incapable of intrigue.

But the young King, chafing at the humiliations to which he was subjected by his mother and the Italian upstart, plotted with his falconer and with Vitry, Captain of the Guard. On April 24, 1617, Concini was shot by the conspirators as he was entering the Louvre. "Now I am King," cried Louis, and all France rallied round him in delight at being delivered from the tyrannical foreigner. *Parlement* declared its approval, and condemned Leonora to death as a sorceress. The rebels laid down their arms. Marie retired perforce to Blois, amidst insults from the Parisians, which plainly intimated that her reign was over. But though she declared that she only looked now for a heavenly crown, she was far from being resigned to losing the Crown of France. She encouraged the Princes of the Blood to make a show of civil war. Escaping through a window from Blois, she herself joined the powerful and turbulent Duke of Épernon. But it was Luynes who was now the real master of the realm. The young King cared only for the chase, and was incapable of devoting himself to the serious business of reigning. The favourite falconer inherited in a day all the wealth and honours which the Concini had accumulated, with greater scandal, indeed, but also with greater pains. At the time of the Queen's fall, Richelieu, to whom she was by this time devoted, had been banished to his bishopric. He was now recalled to advise her. Luynes calculated, no doubt, that his advice would be sagacious. Sagacious it was. Richelieu urged the Queen to make terms. She could not hope to resist the royal army; his own return to power clearly depended upon his success as a mediator. By the Treaty of Angers (1620), a formal reconcilia-

tion was arranged between the King and the Queen-mother.

The Government was now free to deal with the Protestants of Béarn and Navarre.

Since the Edict of Nantes, a revival of Catholicism had taken place. Languedoc and the West remained the strongholds of Protestantism, but even these districts had been invaded by the Jesuits and Capucins. Luynes himself was a sworn foe of the Huguenots. A decree was issued in 1617 restoring to the Catholic Church lands which had been for half a century in the hands of the Protestants. The Huguenots protested in an Assembly at Loudun; but Louis now marched to Pau, enforced the decree, and pronounced the reunion of Béarn and Navarre with the Crown. Alarmed and indignant at this infraction of their rights, the Protestants met in assembly at La Rochelle (December 25, 1620). Levies were raised, and Bouillon appointed Commander-in-Chief. In imitation of the United Provinces of Holland, the Huguenots divided France into eight departments, each of which had its General. The cry was raised that they wished to form a Republic within the State. Court and Catholicism combined to crush them. A royal army occupied Saumur, took St. Jean d'Angély, which had been gallantly defended by Soubise, and besieged Montauban (August, 1621), which was defended no less resolutely by La Force. When the Duc de Rohan came to its relief, Luynes, who, though ignorant of arms, had assumed the office of Constable of France, opened negotiations. Rohan rejected them, and by November Luynes was obliged to raise the siege. The moderation of the Constable's policy, and his feeble conduct of the campaign, roused the resentment of the more violent Catholics. The favourite would probably have fallen from power had he not died in December after the sacking of Monheur. In spite of his

greed of power, he had shown himself more capable of prudent direction of affairs than the Concini, whom he supplanted. The field was now open to Richelieu, who, as the trusted adviser of the Queen-mother, now reconciled to the King, gradually absorbed the whole direction of affairs. He received the Cardinal's robe, beneath which he was to hide so many secret designs, in September, 1622. A few weeks later, when Condé had ineffectually besieged Montpellier, the peace named after that place was signed. It reaffirmed the Edict of Nantes. But of the 200 strongholds formerly conceded to the Huguenots, only two, Montauban and La Rochelle, were allowed to remain in their hands. And Protestant Assemblies were forbidden for the future.

Thanks to the persistence of the Queen-mother, Richelieu had been appointed to the Council, though only on condition that he held no office. But no conditions could fetter such genius as his. He had only to wait till the Chief of the Council, the Marquis de la Vieuville, had revealed his incapacity by his blundering and contradictory foreign policy in attempting to treat with Holland, England, and Spain at once. Then Richelieu took his place as Chief of the Council.

For eighteen years he remained the chief, and practically the sole, Minister of a jealous, capricious, sullen-tempered King, whose normal attitude of lazy indifference was rendered more dangerous by fits of spasmodic energy. Yet Richelieu managed to keep his master faithful to him, in spite of the perpetual and virulent opposition of priests, courtiers, and women, all united in the desire to overthrow the imperious Cardinal. No doubt the permanence of his Ministry depended upon its unfailing success. But Richelieu knew how to manage the jealous and capricious temper of the King; he was always on the watch lest he should be influenced by others, and, posing

as his shadow, always represented himself as the mouth-piece of the King's desires and the exponent of the royal policy. It is to Louis' credit that he was capable of appreciating the greatness of his servant, of curbing his petulance for the benefit of his kingdom, and of submitting to the domination of a strong man, whose strength was unquestionably exerted for the glory of France.

Richelieu had long been preparing the young King's mind for the policy which he was now to put in practice. As friend and foe, the Cardinal had learned the temper of the Huguenot minority, and was determined to crush it once for all. Abroad, the vacillating policy of France had allowed Spain and Austria to expand. Richelieu was determined to undermine the Hapsburg supremacy. At home, the turbulence of the nobles, the republicanism of the Huguenot Assemblies, the disorder of the finances, all called, in his eyes, for similar treatment. He was determined to apply it, and, by establishing an absolute despotism at home, to make his country once more a leading Power in Europe.

His first move was to check the aggression of the House of Austria in the Valtelline. That strip of territory, on the lines of communication between France and Germany, belonged to a Protestant confederacy, the Alpine Grisons. The Spaniards had made this a pretext for conquering it in the name of the Pope. Richelieu, dropping the feeble expostulations of his predecessor, despatched an army which promptly put an end to the Spanish scheme. In the matrimonial region of diplomacy, Richelieu atoned for this opposition to Catholicism. He negotiated a marriage between Henrietta Maria, the beautiful sister of Louis XIII., and the Prince of Wales (Charles I.)—a union which had been in the air ever since that Prince and the Duke of Buckingham, on their way to Spain, had met her, themselves in disguise, at a dance at Marie's

Court at Paris. But whereas La Vieuville had been ready to waive the question of the treatment of the Catholics in England, Richelieu insisted that the English King should promise to allow his Catholic subjects to practice their religion in private. On the other hand, he maintained the alliance with the Dutch. Thanks to this combination, he was free to deal with the Huguenots, and to suppress an ill-contrived rising on their part under the Duke of Rohan and his brother, Soubise. "Whilst the Huguenots keep foot in France, the King will never be master at home, nor be able to undertake any glorious enterprise abroad." So Richelieu commented in May, 1625. But he bided his time whilst he constructed a fleet which should be able, without relying on Dutch or English, who had lent him very grudging aid on this occasion, to take La Rochelle, and expel the hated Protestants from France.

Meantime, he concluded a peace (February, 1626) with them, by which the King retained Fort Louis, merely undertaking not to annoy the commerce of La Rochelle, which that stronghold menaced.

The English had encouraged the Huguenots to accept these terms, thinking that, if the French King were free from fear of trouble at home, he would attack Spain. But at the same time Richelieu concluded a treaty with Spain (Monçon, March 5, 1626), by which the sovereignty of the Grisons over Valtelline was recognized, and Catholicism alone was to be practised there. English, Spaniards, Huguenots alike had been tricked; the Venetians, Savoyards, and Grisons were no better pleased when they found that their French allies had been making terms behind their backs.

The Cardinal had need now of all his coolness and cunning to extricate himself from the intrigues set on foot by cabals of Princes of the Blood, and the high dames

of the Court, to compass his ruin, together with that of the Queen-mother.

Never had women been more influential in Court intrigues, never had they been more highly cultivated and intellectual than at this period, when Richelieu built for himself the magnificent Palais-Royal at Paris, and founded the French Academy to encourage learning ; when the Marquise de Rambouillet held, in the *salon bleu* of her beautiful *hôtel*, those meetings of clever and brilliant guests, writers and *grands seigneurs*, who, amidst surroundings the most exquisite, cultivated the art of refined conversation. This salon, with which the history of French salons opens, was a real power in France from 1624 to 1648. The reigning hostess and her friends exercised a sort of literary jurisdiction over taste and morals. With the example of the Queen-mothers, Catherine and Marie de' Medici, before them, the *Grandes Dames* naturally extended their influence to political intrigue. "In France," writes one in 1623, "all great events usually depend upon women."

The young King was cold and chaste ; the Queen, Anne of Austria, was beautiful and neglected. Her bosom friend was Marie de Rohan, the widow of Luynes, now Madame de Chevreuse. She had fallen in love with Henry Rich, Lord Holland, one of the negotiators of the English marriage, and she led the young Queen to accept as her *cavaliere sirvente* the gay, handsome, reckless Duke of Buckingham, the English Minister who had come to escort the Princess Henrietta Maria to England (May, 1625). Buckingham pressed his suite ardently and without discretion. Marie de' Medici invited him to leave the Court. He returned to take a last passionate farewell of the young Queen, and, kneeling by her bedside, gave utterance to his deep devotion. The Queen rebuked him, but not in anger. The King was furious. And Richelieu

and Buckingham are said from that moment to have conceived for each other a mutual hatred, from whatever motive, which was soon to affect the policies of their countries. A coolness also arose between the Queen and the Cardinal. The lovers, it would seem, regarded him as responsible for their separation. It was not long before Anne even indulged her spite to the extent of intriguing with Spain in order to embarrass the Minister of France.

The time had now arrived when the Cardinal was ready to strike the blow, long prepared, against the Protestants. Abroad, England, irritated by the Romanizing attitude of Henrietta Maria, was eager to espouse their cause. Buckingham, for private and public reasons alike, was anxious to help them. In July, 1627, he sailed with a fleet to La Rochelle. But whilst he wasted time outside the harbour, a greater than he brought his forces up to the walls and mighty bastions of the rebellious city. At the Cardinal's word, a cordon of forts was drawn round the town; an immense mole and boom were built across the harbour. Elaborately organized, the campaign everywhere betrayed the master-hand of Richelieu, who, in the King's absence, acted as Commander-in-Chief, and, never happier than when on the battle-field, imposed upon his army a discipline rare in those days. Completely blockaded, the Rochellais resisted with the utmost obstinacy, waiting desperately for the return of the English fleet.

For Buckingham had been obliged to retire ignominiously in November. In the following May the English fleet returned, effected nothing, retired, and returned again to effect as little in October. Richelieu's mole and batteries had rendered attack from the sea hopeless. La Rochelle had long been *in extremis*. The people had elected Guiton, a resolute sailor, as their Mayor, who, upon his election, had laid his dagger upon the table, and

declared that he would slay with it the first person who spoke of surrendering. His spirit reflected the determination of the Protestants. But the besiegers were no less determined. No supplies could run the close blockade by land and sea. When provisions were wellnigh exhausted, the women, children, and infirm were turned out of the town, to seek succour in the enemy's camp. They were stripped, and driven back. The famine grew terrible. Leather and cats were almost luxuries. Thousands of the besieged died of starvation. At length, when their English allies failed them, the inevitable surrender was made (October 28, 1628). The garrison was reduced to sixty-four Frenchmen and ninety Englishmen.

The surviving Huguenots were granted their lives, and the right of free exercise of their religion within La Rochelle. The fortifications were raised, and all the rights and privileges of the town, which were many and valuable, were forfeited. The municipal administration was placed under royal officials. The moderation of these terms, however, was anything but popular with Catholic zealots. But whilst aiming at establishing unity of faith, Richelieu did not think violence the likeliest way to achieve it. Towards the Church his policy was eminently national. He checked any tendency to increase the influence of Rome in France with a strong hand, but he was equally opposed to the claims of Gallicanism when it strove to assert its independence of the Crown.

When, after fifteen months of siege, La Rochelle had bowed to his will, Richelieu in person undertook a campaign to save Casale and Mantua, the citadels of Italy, from the Spaniards. By the capture of Pinerolo, he checked once more the Hapsburg designs (1630). Then, fresh from crushing the Protestants at home, he entered the field of German politics as the protector of Protestant

Princes against the aggression of a Catholic Emperor. For during the whole of Richelieu's Ministry the Thirty Years' War was in progress. For a time the Hapsburgs, aided by the genius of Wallenstein, carried all before them in their endeavour to win back Europe to Roman Catholicism. To maintain the balance of power, Richelieu entered into an alliance with Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, whose victories saved the Protestant cause in Germany. The struggle absorbed all the energies of the Minister and all the resources of the country. But whilst Richelieu was thus moulding the destinies of Germany, he was making France the leading Power in Europe. For after the death of Gustavus Adolphus, the war resolved itself into a duel between the Houses of Hapsburg and Bourbon. Obligated at length to drop his system of indirect attacks through opposing alliances, Richelieu declared war with Spain in May, 1635.

In spite of occasional reverses, he conducted it with extraordinary success (1635-1642). Alsace was conquered; Catalonia and Roussillon, revolting from the Spanish Crown, were united to France. To hamper the Austrians on their flanks, Richelieu made alliances with Sweden, Turkey, and Poland; he helped Portugal to establish her independence, made treaties with the Italian Princes to expel the enemy from Italy, intrigued in Germany against the Emperor, and tried to secure the co-operation of the Dutch at sea. When he died, the triumph of France, after many vicissitudes, was not complete, but it was assured. The Hapsburgs had been checked at every point. Richelieu's work was brought to a successful conclusion by his follower, Mazarin. The Peace of Westphalia was soon to trumpet the triumph of French policy over the House of Austria, and the Peace of the Pyrenees to announce the fall of Spain from her high estate.

That Richelieu was able to conduct his policy to a so triumphant issue is the more amazing, since he was handicapped not only by the lack of means for sustaining a permanent army, but also by treachery and intrigue on every hand. Masterly and merciless, never swerving from his purpose or ceasing from toil to accomplish it, he defeated the treacherous scheming of the King's confessor, the jealous intrigues of his royal mother, the cowardly baseness of his brother Gaston of Orleans, and the pious persuasion of his favourite, La Fayette, murmuring sweet foolishness from her convent cell. For the dominant force of the Cardinal's mind always imposed itself upon the feeble and indolent monarch, and made it clear to him that France had need of this hated, invalid Minister of the iron will and unfailing resource. The cabals of the nobles against him culminated in failure when they seemed nearest success, on the Day of Dupes (November 11, 1630), when Marie de' Medici retired into exile shaking the dust of France from off her feet, and leaving her ungrateful, and now hated, lover to rule, as always, without reference to her incompetent advice.

Michelet has painted in vivid colours the torments of struggle and the complex character of the Cardinal :

" One can easily understand that he was always ill. The insufficiency of his resources, the continual effort to invent impossible money ; on the other hand, the Court intrigues, the pricks of no one knows how many invisible insects, were something to keep him in a terrible agitation. But even that was not enough ; twenty other devils haunted this restless soul, like a house swept and garnished—the battle of women, tardy gallantries ; moreover, theology and the wild desire to write, to make verses, tragedies ! What tragedy could be more gloomy than his very person ! Macbeth is gay in comparison. And he had attacks of violence in which his inner fury would have strangled him, had he not, like Hamlet, massacred

tapestries with the blows of his dagger. More often he swallowed his bitterness and fury, covered everything with the outward seeming of ecclesiastical decency. His powerlessness, his passion, turned within, worked themselves out on his body; the red iron burned his soul, and he was near to death."

Richelieu laid down the principles which were to guide French foreign policy until the diplomatic Revolution, the "reversal of alliances" of 1756. He achieved another not less important work by substituting permanent officials (*Intendants*) for the nobles as Governors of the Provinces. The bad government of these nobles invited this step towards centralization; their factious independence and selfish endeavours to re-establish a spurious feudalism at the expense of the Crown and the people prompted and justified the Edict of 1626, by which it was decreed that all castles not necessary for frontier defence should be destroyed, and that no fortification of private houses should be permitted.

"In France there are too many châteaux," said an old proverb. The destruction of many of these feudal strongholds was an evident sign that the career of the robber-baron was at an end, and that the King's law was henceforth to prevail.

Whilst the *Intendants* brought the Government into closer touch with the Provinces, and the King's Council was reorganized so as to be capable of dealing with the increase of administrative business, the Provincial Estates were either abolished or deprived of much of their independence. Political power was taken from the *Parlement* of Paris, as it had been from the Huguenots and the nobles when, by an Edict of 1641, it was forbidden to take cognizance of affairs of State on its own initiative.

The administrative system of centralized and absolute government, thus constructed by Richelieu upon the

ruins of noble and provincial liberties, was to last until the Revolution. In view of the circumstances he could have done no more. Constitutional government was out of the question at the time. Only so great a diplomatist and iron-willed a Minister could have achieved so much.

The nobles did not submit without a blow to the loss of their political power, although their immense privileges and exemptions were left them. Conspiracy after conspiracy to overthrow him was formed by the Condés, the Soissons, the Montmorencys, the Epernons, by Gaston of Orleans, and Cinq-Mars, only to be defeated by the vigilance, nerve, and adroitness of the threatened Minister. The Bastille was filled with prisoners of note. Richelieu's spies and agents were everywhere. Arbitrary trials, conducted by Commissioners appointed by the Cardinal, sent his enemies to the scaffold, for "reasons of State." For to Richelieu, his enemies were the enemies of that strong united France, which he was labouring with such super-human energy and determination to build up. Even Henri, Duc de Montmorency, Governor of Languedoc, who had joined the insurrection of Gaston of Orleans in 1632, was beheaded, in spite of all prayers and threats. The lesson must be taught that no one, however highly born, could bear arms against his Sovereign without risk of a felon's death. So in the end the nobles had to choose between exile, prison, or submission. Their fall rendered the monarchy more absolute and supreme.

Richelieu had neither the time nor the knowledge, though he had the desire, to reconstitute the financial position of the country. The maintenance of six armies in the field and lavish expenditure at home yearly increased the embarrassments of the country. As the Budget grew larger, the condition of the unhappy taxpayer grew worse. The misery of the groaning peasantry found expression in furious; hopeless uprisings, like that

led by "Barefooted John" at the head of an "army of suffering." They were ruthlessly crushed by the iron hand of the Cardinal.

The colonial policy of Richelieu was in harmony with the grandeur of his other ideas, but was atrophied by the same cause. He encouraged Chartered Companies to make settlements, which, when at war with half Europe, he had not sufficient resources to develop. An attempt was made to occupy Madagascar, and some of the West Indies were settled. But the companies launched under the ægis of the Minister found their chief strength in the efforts of great pioneers like Champlain* in Canada, and in the embarrassing devotion of the Jesuits, whose zeal in converting the Indians absorbed to a great extent the colonizing energy of the French.

As Richelieu drew all the threads of government more and more into his own hands, he became more proud and imperious. He built palaces on a royal scale, and his train was as magnificent as Wolsey's. He could almost say, "*L'État, c'est moi !*" He chose his subordinates carefully.

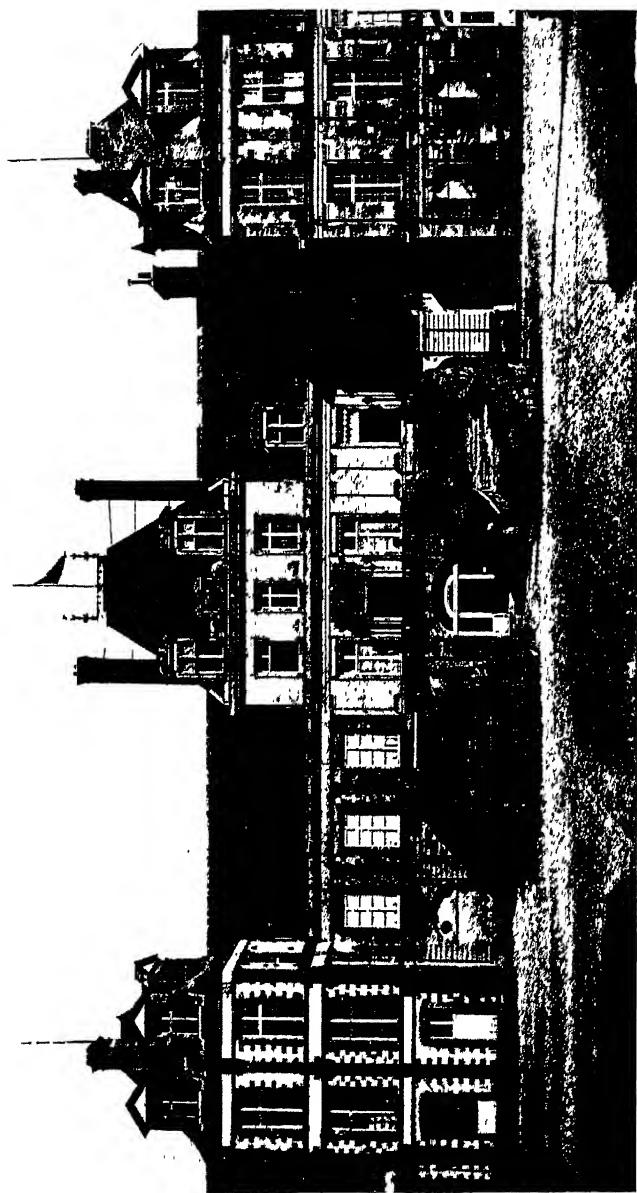
They were for the most part capable nonentities, who faithfully aided him in his immense toil of governing. But one there was, Jules Mazarin,† who was no mediocrity. It was upon his shoulders that the mantle of Richelieu fell when the great Minister died in 1642, in a blaze of triumph, after crushing the last conspiracy against him, that of Cinq-Mars.

Richelieu had made France the great military Power of

* During the siege of La Rochelle, the English forced Champlain to capitulate. He returned to Quebec with 200 colonists and sailors after the Treaty of St. Germain (1632), when Quebec and Nova Scotia were restored to Canada by the English.

† Giulio Mazarini, the supple Italian Abbé, had helped Richelieu in his intrigues in Italy before the Treaty of Ratisbon (1630). He brought him to France to fill the place of his right-hand man, Père Joseph, in 1638, and made him a Cardinal.

Europe. His own words best indicate the scope of his patriotic ambition. "I have tried to give to Gaul the boundaries that Nature intended for it, and to identify Gaul with France." He died, as he had lived, with few friends and many enemies, detested by the people for the merciless severity of his rule. But, posterity has repaid him with its gratitude, because it acknowledges that he secured for France the glory of occupying the foremost place among the nations for a century.



.V. Photo

THE PALACE OF FONTAINEBLEAU. Pages 218 and 383.

Showing the horseshoe-shaped staircase where Napoleon bade farewell to the weeping soldiers of the Old Guard on his abdication in 1814.
The favourite retreat of François I., who built it (1528-1647).

XIX

MAZARIN AND THE "GRAND MONARQUE"

(Louis XIV., A.D. 1643—1661)

SEVEN months after the death of Richelieu, died his "illustrious slave," Louis XIII. Thanks to the pious offices of his favourite, Mademoiselle de La Fayette, he had been reconciled to his Queen. And on September 5, 1638, an heir had been born to him, Louis XIV., who destroyed for ever the hopes of that incorrigible and cowardly conspirator, Gaston, Duke of Orleans. Gaston had been heir to the throne for twenty-eight years. He was now supplanted by a babe, whose reign was to prove the longest in history until recent years,* and one of the most eventful.

A reaction very similar to that which followed upon the deaths of Philippe le Bel, Louis XI., and Henri IV., ensued upon the death of Louis XIII.

The crowd of exiles who now returned from abroad expected the dismissal of Richelieu's creatures and the reward of their devotion to the Queen's cause. They were soon disillusioned. Anne had neither the ability nor the temperament to rule, but she had a queenly carriage worthy of the blood of Charles V., and made a good figurehead as Regent. She appointed her lover, the prodigal and avaricious Cardinal Mazarin, to preside over the Council. Whether that subtle statesman was

* The reigns of Queen Victoria of Great Britain, and of the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria, have surpassed that of Louis XIV.

in truth the father of her second son, the Duke of Orleans, or not, certain it is that now, by a strange trick of love and fortune, the destinies of France lay in the hands of a Spanish Princess and a Neapolitan major-domo. Issue was soon joined with the reactionary nobles, when they, anxious to regain their position as feudal Princes, began to demand that the government of the Provinces should be restored to them, and Richelieu's *Intendants* abolished. For ten years the struggle lasted. At the end of that time Mazarin could boast that the system perfected by Richelieu was intact. But not before civil war had devastated the country, not before the Queen and her Court had twice been forced to fly from Paris and suffer indigence, not before Mazarin himself had twice been driven into exile.

The first of the series of insurrections known as the Fronde* arose out of an attempt on the part of the *Parlement* of Paris to check wasteful administration and excessive taxation by refusing to register edicts which only promised to increase the burdens of the people for the profit of the financiers. But the magistrates were chiefly concerned in opposing Mazarin, since he proposed to deprive them of their hereditary right to office by suspending the *paulette*. They were too much concerned for their own pockets to use this opportunity to force a constitutional issue. Whilst clamouring for reform, they thought first of their own caste and right of exemption. The people, however, exasperated by taxation and disgusted at the extravagant prosperity of the Italian adventurer, rose when Broussel, one of the chief spokesmen of the discontent, was arrested. Riots ensued in Paris, and the streets were barricaded (the Day of Barricades, August 26, 1648). But the crowd was blind and leader-

* Called after a children's game (*fronde*=a sling or catapult) forbidden by the police.

less. An insurrection which was aimless was easily prevented from developing into a revolution.

The second phase of the Fronde (1649-1653) was the work of the nobles, all struggling for pensions and governments, but each blindly for his selfish ends, siding first with the Court and then against it, and always without a thought of patriotism or political progress. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, *La Grande Demoiselle*, daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, turned the guns of the Bastille upon the royalist part. The great Condé and his adventurous sister, the Duchess de Longueville, led the Fronde ; Marshall Turenne joined the rebels. The Prince de Condé and Turenne even allied themselves with the Spaniards, and helped them to invade France. Their very lack of patriotism ruined their cause.

By degrees the chaos of disorder, in which each fought for himself and his vague idea of liberty and profit, produced a reaction in favour of the monarchy, a reaction hastened by Condé's intrigues with Spain and England. Louis returned to Paris in October, 1652, and recalled Mazarin. The triumph of the Minister was complete, and was signalized by the collapse of the *Parlement*. The very magistrates who had recently set a price on his head now sought his protection, and condemned the rebel Condé to death.

Parliament, and people, and nobles alike had proved their lack of creative political ideas. The anarchy of the Fronde makes it clear to us, as it made it clear to Louis XIV. himself, that an absolute monarchy was the only possible form of government at this time. It was in this sense that Louis used the famous phrase, "*L'État, c'est moi !*"

It is astonishing that through a decade of such wild disorder, distress, famine, plague, and anarchy France, under the guidance of Mazarin, was yet able to complete

the task which Richelieu had mapped out for her abroad. The new reign had been inaugurated by a great victory gained by the Duc d'Enghien, at Rocroi (May, 1643), over the Spaniards, who were advancing from the Netherlands into France. This battle not only revealed a brilliant General in the Duc d'Enghien, son of Henri II. de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, but also inflicted a staggering blow upon the Spanish forces. In Enghien and Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne, France had now two great Generals, whose campaigns in Italy, on the Rhine, Flanders, and Bavaria, compelled the Emperor to sign the Peace of Westphalia (October 24, 1648). By this treaty France obtained Pignerolo in Italy, and secured a foothold in Germany by the acquisition of Breisach, and the right to garrison Philippsburg, and to navigate the Rhine. She continued to occupy Lorraine; and the cession of Alsace (with the exception of Strasburg) and the Three Bishoprics (Metz, Toul, and Verdun) strengthened and extended her Rhine frontier.

The Treaty of Westphalia signalized the success of the policy by which France, since the days of Francis I. and Charles V., had set herself, by arms and alliances, whether with Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Holland, or Turkey, to oppose the union and supremacy of the two Hapsburg Houses. For whilst Austria acknowledged her defeat, Spain, hoping to profit by the troubles of the Fronde, withdrew at the last moment, and took no part in the peace.

Civil war delayed, indeed, but did not avert, the final success of France. She suffered losses in Italy, Spain, and Flanders. But whilst Turenne, at the head of a veteran French army, was pitting his genius against Condé and his raw Spanish levies in Flanders, and the skill of those great French Generals was holding the balance between the two monarchies, Mazarin secured the co-operation of Cromwell, and of the League of the Electors



LOUIS XIV. (1643-1715).

From the picture by Rigaud at the Louvre.

of the Rhine, and turned the scale (1657). Before the walls of Dunkirk, at the Battle of the Dunes (June 14, 1658), the final blow was struck. Turenne, with the help of the English, destroyed the Spanish army. Dunkirk was surrendered, and handed over to the English. It remained for Mazarin to negotiate the peace with Spain which this victory had forced. After prolonged and difficult negotiations, the famous Peace of the Pyrenees was concluded (November 7, 1659). It was an apparently brilliant conclusion for France, and secured peace to an exhausted country, whilst full of diplomatic possibilities for the future. The Spanish Netherlands, indeed, still eluded the eager grasp of Mazarin, and he was obliged to desert the alliance with Portugal, whilst Spain insisted upon France regaining a great General by being reconciled with Condé. But the crux of the treaty lay in the negotiations for the marriage of Maria Theresa, the Infanta, with Louis XIV. Mazarin secured this alliance of the Houses of France and Spain, destined to prove so fatal to Europe, upon the condition that no issue of the marriage could succeed to the throne of Spain. Maria Theresa was to receive a dowry of 500,000 crowns. Only a fifth of that sum was ever paid. It seems likely that Mazarin calculated upon Spain's inability to pay, and foresaw that in such a case the renunciation of the French claim to the Spanish Succession, as well as to the Spanish Netherlands and Franche-Comté as the marriage portion of Maria Theresa, could be declared void. He was a great gambler in private life, and backed his luck in politics. As events proved, he won. But the game brought no honour and no profit to France. It involved her in the war by which she lost her colonies and gained nothing. Mazarin returned to Paris in almost regal triumph, and passed the remainder of his life in extravagant pomp, discarding the stern rule of Richelieu, and

endeavouring to soothe the discontent of the nobles by indulging his own taste for fêtes and gallantry, and all the lavish display of a brilliant Court. When he died, in 1661, he handed over to the young monarch a country which had emerged victorious from the struggle with Spain and Austria, enriched by Spanish and German territory, arbitress of the Peace of the North, the protectress of the League of the Rhine, more powerful in Germany than the Emperor himself—the greatest Power, in fact, in Europe.*

* *Cf. Lavisse, vii. 1, 77*

XX

LE ROI SOLEIL

(LOUIS XIV., A.D. 1661—1715)

LOUIS could not reign during the lifetime of Mazarin. But upon the death of that astute and grasping Minister he soon made it evident that a new sun had risen, and that, so long as it remained above the horizon, there was to be no place for lesser lights. Mazarin had advised him to appoint no new First Minister. And now, when Ministers and courtiers came to ask the King to whom they should address themselves, he replied, to their amazement: "To me." The King was to be his own Prime Minister, and for fifty years he laboured, with a regularity and application almost incredible, at the business of State. "It is by work one reigns," he told his son, and he adhered faithfully to the standard imposed, so he believed, upon a Sovereign as the representative of God upon earth.

No one, it is true, ever enjoyed the business of being King more. And in appearance, as in manner, in ambition, if not altogether in achievement, he was every inch a King. Handsome and courtly, if egotistical, of a kindly disposition, if amorous and self-indulgent, Louis was eminently fitted by Nature to play the part of an autocrat. He succeeded to the throne at a moment when, after centuries of struggle, real national government had been evolved out of feudal chaos, when practic-

ally every function of general and local government was exercised by the King, and scarce a vestige remained of any constitutional check upon his irresponsible will. *Si veut le roi, si veut la loi*. Educated by an indulgent mother, and in statesmanship by the teaching of Mazarin, as well as by his experience of the Fronde, Louis' conception of kingship was necessarily that of an absolute monarchy. The story is well known how, in 1655, when *Parlement*, after registering certain fiscal edicts, sought to reassert its independence by discussing them and remonstrating, the young King galloped from Vincennes to Paris in his hunting-clothes, and, whip in hand, entered the Palais de Justice. There he scolded the astonished legists, and forbade them to deliberate upon his edicts in future. And when the President appealed to the interest of the State, the King replied: "*L'État, c'est moi!*" In fact his conduct was not so brusque, but the story indicates truly enough, in a brisk, if inaccurate, form, the policy of the autocrat who was to rule France for half a century.

No despotism can be maintained without the aid of an efficient police. This reign saw the multiplication of *lettres de cachet*, the worst of all outrages upon public liberty, by which, at the King's order, citizens were arrested and imprisoned without explanation or trial. Nicholas de la Reynie and the Marquis d'Argenson were the two famous Lieutenants of Police who served the Grand Monarque, not only in this department, but also by executing the duties of a city police, lighting and improving the streets, and thereby enormously advancing the decency and security of Paris.

To do honour to *Le Roi Soleil* ("Sun-King"), all the nobility of France crowded to Paris or Versailles, and spent their time in observing the rules of the rigid etiquette in which he delighted. For Louis, never at ease in Paris,

spent millions in transforming the hunting-box of Louis XIII. into a magnificent palace, and the marshes of Versailles into wonderful gardens. The grandeur of the architecture of Versailles (Mansart), its marble halls and splendid paintings, set amidst formal fountains and lawns and flower-beds and shrubberies, still reflects very vividly the majestic splendour of the Grand Monarque. Still, in its stately solitude, that vast gilded palace conjures up the vision of the immense and superficially brilliant Court, where Louis XIV. reigned in the midst of a France made in his image. Here banquets were spread, and sweet music breathed among the trees, and fireworks were reflected in the waters of the lakes, and nymphs emerged from the illuminated grottoes to sing the praises of the great King. For fêtes and carousals succeeded one another at this brilliant Court, to amuse and honour the successive mistresses of the insatiable monarch.*

Literature also reflected the artificial atmosphere of the Court. Under the influence of Malherbe and Boileau, poetry proper withered. Poets betook themselves to courtly compliment, stately diction, and polished phrasing, or to the artificial and elaborate drama encouraged by the Court. The Senecan tragedies of Racine and Corneille harmonize with the neo-classicism of Versailles. The sonorous sermons of Bossuet resound with the supreme eloquence of loyal adulation. But whilst Lebrun was decorating the palace with the apotheosis of the Sun-King, Molière was satirizing the foibles, fashions, and

* Notably Mademoiselle de la Vallière and the Marquise de Montespan. The latter was supplanted by Madame de Maintenon, widow of the burlesque poet, Scarron. She had been the governess of Madame de Montespan's bastards, and, calling piety to the aid of her charms, ousted her benefactress by that admixture of religion and gallantry which then best appealed to the prematurely aged and disillusioned monarch. She was secretly married to him in 1686.

social abuses of an artificial age. And whilst Bossuet was preaching, Pascal was thinking, and laying the foundations of rationalism in France.

The splendours of Louis' Court could hide, but must increase the financial sores of the country. Mazarin and Fouquet, the Superintendent of Finance, filled their pockets with untold sums, but in the very year of the Peace of the Pyrenees, Colbert wrote that the King's credit was exhausted, and that bankruptcy was imminent. The financiers, who were growing enormously rich, would only advance money on the most exorbitant terms, and the Superintendent acted at once as the Minister and the Creditor of the King. Speculation and corruption were rampant; scarce a third of the annual revenue reached the Treasury. At length the pride and ambition of Fouquet led to his fall. The very splendour of a fête which he gave to Louis at his house at Vaux determined the needy monarch to make his rapacious Minister disgorge his prey (1661). He was imprisoned for life,* and Jean-Baptiste Colbert was called to take his place, side by side with Le Tellier and Hugues de Lionne, as one of the small Council which advised the Grand Monarque in the task of governing his kingdom himself. The days of great Ministers—especially Cardinal-Ministers—were in eclipse.

But the work which Colbert did and the work of which he dreamed was not the less important. To restore the shattered finances of the kingdom, he counselled economy and the encouragement of commerce. The greatness of a country, he argued, depends upon its wealth. The greater the country, the greater the monarch. To this end, to economize and stimulate production, he worked with a prodigious and desperate energy.

* He was long supposed to be the mysterious prisoner known as the Man in the Iron Mask.

He encouraged agriculture by relieving it from taxation, improving the breeds of cattle, and introducing a code for highways and forests ; he encouraged industry by fostering the textile trades, commerce by regulating customs, reducing tariffs, and constructing great canals. To bring wealth to the kingdom he revived the drooping enterprise of the Colonial Companies, to which he granted loans, and planted new settlements in Canada (1665), Senegal, the West Indies, Newfoundland, and Madagascar. In Asia the Compagnie des Indes (1664) was established at Surat, Chandernagore, and Pondicherry.

French colonization was, however, largely a forced and artificial movement, inspired by the zeal of the Court for the propagation of Catholicism, and Louis' dreams of worldwide Empire. Richelieu had developed New France energetically, if artificially, with the intention of checking the growth of Spain's transatlantic possessions. Under Louis, Canada was administered like a province of France. The brilliant daring of individual French explorers, and the skill of French traders and Jesuits in dealing with the natives, were not backed up by the nation at large. Jacques Bonhomme, for the most part, bound by his love for the productive soil of *La belle France*, preferred to stay at home and work it with unsparing zeal and toil. The Colonial movement, inaugurated from the top, was maintained by a population of priests, officials, soldiers, and a few genuine traders and colonists, and by relays of criminals and paupers, who were shipped over together with innocent or immoral women, who were seized, exported, and forcibly married to the garri-sons. Moreover, owing to the expense of the wars and the loss of sea-power, Government aid even of this kind was spasmodic and intermittent.

Minister of Marine after 1669, Colbert built a great navy in the hope of gaining wealth by annexing Holland.

But all his efforts, which can only be faintly indicated here, were nullified by the extravagance of the King and his Court, and by the impossible handicap of an ever-increasing horde of privileged classes—idle nobles, unproductive clergy, and officials who paid no taxes. Son of a shop-keeper at Rheims, Colbert was a veritable revolutionary in his bitter hatred of the unproductive castes of nuns, lawyers, monks, and nobles. He reduced the number of the privileged by revoking the irregular patents of nobility granted during the last thirty years; he reduced the *gabelle* and the *taille* (tax on landed property); he endeavoured to make Louis adapt his expenditure to income. He placed the ugly facts of extravagance, waste, and misery before his royal master with bitter forcefulness. The roads and towns were decaying under the weight of taxation; the price of salt had been multiplied five times since the days of Henri IV.; viticulture was being ruined by impositions; every manufactured article had increased five times in price, and goods, in passing from one Province to another, became twenty times dearer through exorbitant Customs. It was all in vain. Colbert's dreams for regulating and co-ordinating taxation were doomed to be unrealized, because economy and peace were the necessary preliminaries. Louis built Versailles, and plunged into war; and whilst his Minister struck at the privileged classes, the King was "ennobling" the nation and keeping the *noblesse d'épée* in luxury and idleness.

Colbert died in disgrace; economists are seldom popular with autocrats. The tax-farmers were always ready to advance loans, at a price to be wrung from the workers. When Colbert had gone, Louis was soon borrowing at 400 per cent.

As things were, it is easy to see that Colbert was attempting the impossible. But had he succeeded in



Aug Rischgitz.

MME. DE MAINTENON. Pages 281-307.

From the portrait by Mignard at Versailles.

cleansing the Augean stable of financial maladministration and correcting the abuses accumulated in the course of centuries of disorder, he might well have enabled the Monarchy to save itself. The splendours of Versailles and the elegance of the Court of *Le Roi Soleil*, the grandeur of his ambitions, the imposing greatness of his military forces, may easily blind us to the critical position of the Crown at this period. But the harmony of the praises of the poets and the courtier eloquence of the Bishops is rudely disturbed by the reports of Colbert. Behind all the glitter and magnificence of the Court and Camp, he reveals to us the hunger and misery of the peasants and the people, harassed by tax-gatherers, irritated by impositions and the seizure of their produce, ruined by exactions which paralyzed the market-place, starving and diseased for lack of salt to season their pot or preserve their bacon. He gave the warning clearly to the old *régime*, but the officials and privileged classes turned a deaf ear to his jeremiads. They were being tried in the balance and found wanting, whilst the ideas of justice and equality began to grow in the soil they were preparing by their selfish ineptitude.

Louis' treatment of the Protestants dealt a no less deadly blow to the prosperity and resources of his kingdom. Always religious, he grew more devout as he grew older. The memory of his sins, which had been many in the course of an unbridled and passionate youth, weighed heavily upon the conscience of the exhausted *roué*. In his earlier days he quarrelled with the Pope, in order to check the temporal power of the Papacy and its claim to control the Gallican Church. But from 1680 onwards, as he passed more and more under the influence of Madame de Maintenon and his Jesuit confessors, his pious zeal increased; he became more and more anxious to demonstrate his orthodoxy by exercising a sort of

vicarious penance. The Court converted itself as the King grew more devout. Fénelon taught him that it was a King's duty to chastise heretics more rigorously than atheists. Under the direction of Père de la Chaise, his natural inclinations ripened into undertaking the "great design"—the enforcement of religious uniformity within the kingdom. Every good Frenchman, thought Louis, ought to profess the religion of his King. All Protestant countries offered too dangerous an example of liberty to please so absolute a monarch.

Increasing pressure, therefore, began to be put upon the Protestants. At first the attempt was made to convert them by offering favours and rewards to "New Catholics," whilst the recalcitrants were excluded from professions and offices. Nor was this all. Bands of missionaries, backed by detachments of dragoons, were quartered upon the Huguenots of Poitou. They made 30,000 converts at the point of the sword, the result of cruel outrages which were, officially, only half authorized. But the policy of dragooning, proved so successful, was applied in every direction. At the same time war was openly waged upon the liberty of the Protestants, their schools and churches. All these hardships were borne with a patience that was deceptive. One or two risings were easily suppressed. Louis was led to believe, by the bigoted Le Tellier, Louvois, and others, that it only remained to announce the destruction of the remaining few, and to eliminate the Protestant ministers, who might induce a backsliding amongst the New Catholics. In January, 1685, the Protestants appealed to the King, instancing their loyalty during the Fronde, and praying for the observance of the Edict of Nantes. Their answer was given in October. The Edict was revoked. Protestant worship was proscribed, the demolition of Protestant meeting-houses ordered, Protestant

ministers were banished and their schools closed. Calvinists attempting to emigrate were condemned to the galleys. A campaign of violent proselytism, reinforced by bribes and torture, was opened. "Torture, abjuration, and enforced communion often took place within twenty-four hours," St. Simon notes. Houses were wrecked, babes were torn from their parents, and sentence of death was pronounced on all who practised any but the Catholic religion. The clock of toleration had been put back a century—not that that was a virtue practised by the Protestants themselves. The "Flight of Israel" ensued. More than 200,000 of the most intelligent, moral, and energetic of her citizens escaped from France to Holland, England, Geneva, or the English colonies, whilst thousands of "incorrigible Huguenots," who refused to conform to Catholicism, were sent to the Bastille, to the Tour de Constance at Aigues Mortes, or to toil for life at the galleys. The mere loss to France in mental, moral, physical, and material force was enormous. And her loss was the gain of her enemies. Henceforth, on every battle-field she found her fiercest foes in her own persecuted emigrants, whom England, Holland, Prussia, and Switzerland counted amongst their most energetic, capable, and enlightened citizens. And those who stayed at home, forcibly converted, remained rebellious at heart.

The Revocation of the Edict, however, was immensely popular with Catholic France. Madame de Sévigné and Bossuet wrote in terms of extravagant eulogy of its author; it was approved of by such men as La Fontaine and La Bruyère.

And yet Louis' idea of uniting France in one religion under one master, a Priest-King, was not to be achieved by such methods. Though persecution raged in Languedoc, Dauphiné, and the Cévennes, the Protestants con-

tinued indomitable. Insurrections, based on the hope of foreign aid, broke out, sporadic, but fanatical in intensity (1702-1710). Ill-armed, undisciplined, few in numbers, the Protestant peasants and artisans—*Camisards*, as they were termed—fought on for their faith, and died at the hands of their countrymen amongst the rocky ravines of the Cévennes. In despair at reducing a whole population in arms, the Catholic Royalists resorted to the brutal method of burning, devastating, and depopulating the whole countryside from Mende to Nîmes, and from Béziers to Pont-Saint-Espirit. And yet Protestantism survived. It began to revive again after fifty years of open persecution, though little helped by foreign aid, and though abandoned in treaties by Protestant countries, when Louis refused to discuss the question with them, as being one of internal policy.

Jansenism, no less than Calvinism, was regarded by Louis and the Church as a heresy to be suppressed, as a note quite out of harmony with the political and religious unity of a kingdom ruled by a Priest-King, in which no sound of criticism or dissent should be heard. The Jansenists, who held the tenets of a Bishop of Ypres—one Jansenius, who died in 1638—had a large following amongst the magistracy. They formed a politico-religious opposition to Louis and the Pope. The studious and ascetic brethren of Port Royal, the Jansenist stronghold, challenged the worldly policy of the Jesuits, and in Pascal's "Provincial Letters" published a deadly criticism of that society and its methods. Louis first suppressed the monastery of Port Royal, and then ordered the buildings to be razed to the ground. This policy of repression intensified the political aspect of Jansenism, which became more and more a duel between *Parlement* and the Pope, between France and the ultramontane policy of the Holy See.



P. H

THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES. Pages 281, 349, etc.

A portion of the front of the largest royal palace in the world. It was mainly built by Louis XIV and his two successors.

Whilst Colbert had built and manned a navy, and partly developed the resources of the country, François-Michel le Tellier, Marquis de Louvois, had reorganized the army almost on modern lines. Guns and bayonets were substituted for the pike ; regiments, artillery schools, and engineer corps instituted ; the French infantry, drilled and trained, became the finest in the world. Vauban introduced new science into the art of defending and attacking towns. In what direction and to what end was Louis to turn these mighty engines of glory, destruction, and gain ? Taste, ambition, tradition alike impelled him to seek glory by arms rather than in the peaceful avenues of commerce. Up to the end of the century, Louis aimed at making himself the master of Europe, a second Charlemagne, who, as Emperor in place of the fallen Hapsburgs, should be the supreme head of Catholicism and defender of Christendom. He pursued the policy of Richelieu in the endeavour to extend the limits of France to the "natural boundaries" of ancient Gaul, but pursued it without the great Cardinal's caution and self-restraint. He carried his attitude of absolute monarch — *je veux et j'aurai*—into foreign politics, and sought to dictate to Emperor, Pope, and Europe, as he dictated to his own subjects. Aiming at the absorption of Spain and the German States, and at competition with England and Holland in America, India, and Africa, he did not attempt to conceal his ends. Nor did he appreciate the disastrous influence which such unscrupulous actions as the seizure of Strasburg and the annexation of territory filched from the Empire in time of peace were bound to exercise. Then, whilst his violence and ambition were alarming all Europe, and advertising the fact that the danger of a French supremacy had succeeded to the Spanish peril, Louis suddenly threw all the Protestant States of Germany, whose interests France

had so long supported against the House of Austria, into the arms of the Emperor, and at the same time earned the undying hatred of England and Holland, already opposed to him through their colonial and commercial interests, by his fatal persecution of the Protestants and his championship of the Jacobite cause. From 1683 dates the downward course of France to the disastrous Peace of Utrecht (1713). She was left to continue the struggle with England for supremacy at sea and for colonial empire with a ruined fleet and shattered finances, until the Peace of Paris (1763) acknowledged the inevitable result.

Anxious to secure the support of the Dutch in his projected attack upon the Spanish Netherlands, Louis entered into a defensive and commercial treaty with them (1662), as with Poland and Denmark. He took little part, however, in the Dutch war with England, which ended in the Treaty of Breda (July, 1667), for he was preparing to assert the claims of Anne and Maria Theresa to the Spanish Netherlands. The will of Philip of Spain (1665) had emphasized their renunciation. But in May, 1667, Louis denounced that renunciation, and, declaring that he could obtain no justice in Madrid for Maria Theresa's rights, he entered Flanders with Turenne, and caught Spain unprepared. Tournai, Oudenarde, Lille, and other towns were captured, thanks to the science of Vauban. A carefully prepared winter campaign under Condé (February, 1668) resulted in the seizure of the Franche-Comté. Spain stood helpless before the threats and prowess of Louis' brilliant forces. Frightened by his aggressive attitude, England, Holland, and Sweden formed a Triple Alliance to protect Spain and hold the French King to the Treaty of the Pyrenees. Their intervention led to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (May, 1668), by which Louis retained the towns he had

captured, but restored Franche-Comté. From that moment he determined to crush the proud, rich, impertinent Protestant Republic which had dared to bar the progress of the Catholic monarch in extending his boundaries to the natural limits of Gaul.

His first step was to isolate the United Provinces by diplomacy and bribes. Through the agency of Madame Henrietta,* the secret Treaty of Dover was negotiated with Charles II. of England (June, 1670). The Stuart King undertook to reconcile himself with the Church of Rome so soon as the affairs of his kingdom would permit, and to aid Louis in his war with Holland. In return he was to receive an annual subsidy of 3,000,000 livres until the conclusion of peace, when Flushing, Middleburgh, and other valuable places were to be conceded to him, which would establish England upon the Scheldt. Sweden, too, was bribed to attack those Princes of the Empire who should attempt to succour the United Provinces; Lorraine, which threatened to be hostile, was seized. Meantime, Holland was being enfeebled by intestine struggles between two parties, one of which was led by Jan de Witt, and the other aimed at the restoration of the young Prince of Orange to the heritage of his ancestors.

In the spring of 1672 two armies of 120,000 men, under Turenne and Condé, and accompanied by the King, converged upon the little Republic. The Rhine was crossed in June; but Louis' triumphal march was checked when the Dutchmen opened their sluices and flooded the country round Amsterdam. The French were forced to retreat before the inundation. Meanwhile, William, Prince of Orange, was elected Stadtholder in place of the

* Henrietta of England, wife of the degenerate Philippe, Duke of Orleans, shared the wit and charm of her brother, Charles II., and had fascinated her brother-in-law, Louis XIV.

old Republican leader, Jan de Witt. The two great protagonists of the century were now face to face. Few could have foreseen that it was William who was to emerge victorious.

In the following year Maestricht fell to Louis and Vauban. Holland was ravaged. But by this time Europe was thoroughly alarmed. The Elector of Brandenburg, the Duke of Lorraine, and other German Princes, with Spain and Austria, came to the assistance of the Dutch. The Anglo-French fleet failed, and the English Parliament would no longer brook war with their fellow-Protestants. But the dazzling campaigns of Turenne and Condé in Alsace, the Netherlands, and the Palatinate, enabled France to hold her own against Europe, and, by a series of treaties with the members of the Coalition, to obtain peace with honour at the expense of Spain. At Nimeguen (August, 1678) a treaty of peace and commerce, by which France renounced the hostile tariff erected by Colbert, was signed with Holland. But Spain was obliged to accept Louis' ultimatum. She received back the places surrendered by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and some others recently captured in Catalonia, but ceded the whole of Franche-Comté and half Flanders. Louis thus gained a series of strongholds forming a firm frontier to France from Dunkirk (which he had purchased from England) to the Maas. Peace was made with the Emperor in the following year. Brandenburg and Denmark were compelled to resign the advantages they had gained by conquering Sweden. Louis returned in triumph to Paris, to be hailed as the conqueror of Europe, and to receive the title of "the Great."

He had, indeed, achieved much. His proud device, *Nec pluribus impar*, was amply justified. But his hopes were not all fulfilled. Whether it was peace or war, he and his ambitious minister, Louvois, would not rest from

their policy of aggrandizement until they had advanced the French frontier to the Scheldt and the Rhine. In 1679, Louvois began a series of movements which scantily concealed the grossest aggression under the guise of law. First he occupied Homburg and Bitche, dependencies of Lorraine, which had been pledged by Duke Charles IV. to the Electors of Treves and Mainz. Then he made the Parliament of Bezançon declare the "reunion" to Franche-Comté of the principality of Montbéliard, the property of the Dukes of Würtemberg. At the Parliament of Metz he instituted a *chambre de réunion* to search out all the territories which could possibly be claimed as fiefs of the Three Bishoprics. As the result, he gave instructions for the passing of decrees for the reunion with France of some eighty fiefs. The seizure of the county of Zweibrücken in this way threw Charles XI. of Sweden, the principal claimant to it, on to the side of the enemies of Louis. In the same way he proceeded with the suppression of the jurisdiction of the Emperor in Alsace and the reunion of territories in those parts. But the reunion of Strasburg, a free imperial city, was achieved by a still more flagrant abuse of force. The town was suddenly seized by troops who had been secretly massed in Alsace (September 27, 1681). At the same time and in the same way Casale was seized—a step towards the domination of Piedmont and, through Piedmont, of Italy. And then, claiming the county of Chiny, which belonged to Spain, Louvois prepared to seize Luxemburg as he had seized Strasburg.

But by this time the Powers were thoroughly alarmed and irritated by these peaceful acquisitions through *chambres de réunion*, backed by 140,000 men under arms. William of Orange was able to focus the nervousness of Europe in a second Coalition against France. By the middle of 1682 the Emperor, Spain, and the German

Princes had all joined with Holland and Sweden in a league for the maintenance of the Treaty of Nimeguen. But Louis, conducting his course of violence and ruse with great diplomatic skill, emerged triumphant. Refusing to be drawn into a crusade against the Turks, who were threatening Vienna and so paralyzing the Coalition, he kept Denmark, Brandenburg, and England at peace with him. He forced Spain to a declaration of war (October, 1683), and then reduced her to accept his ultimatum. Genoa, which was building some ships for Spain, was bombarded and humbled. Again Europe had been compelled to bow to the Grand Monarque. At Ratisbon a truce for twenty years was signed between France and the Emperor, and France and Spain (August, 1684). The Emperor, embarrassed by a Protestant rebellion in Hungary, which Louis had fomented, ceded Strasburg, Kehl, and all the "reunions," on condition that Louis ceased to aid the Hungarian rebels. Spain gave up Luxemburg, Bouvines, Beaumont, and Chimay, in return for Courtrai and Dixmude, captured in the previous year.

The conclusion of this treaty seemed to promise a long period of peace. Louis believed himself the conqueror of Europe. But it is from this moment that his sun begins to set. In reality, France was much exhausted. It was in vain that Colbert had economized and increased the revenue. Louis always lived beyond his income. Moreover, Europe, already so injured and resentful, was soon stung to protest by the Very Christian King's treatment of the Protestants.

For now that peace was concluded, considerations of State no longer restrained the zeal of the Catholics. Louis had kept England neutral by pensioning the Stuart Kings with the French pistoles they loved so well, and so keeping them independent of Parliament. He now

encouraged James II. in his eager attempt to establish autocracy and Catholicism in the teeth of the English nation, and thus hastened the very Revolution which was to prove so fatal to his schemes. And the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes enabled William of Orange and the Emperor Leopold to unite the Protestant powers in a league against him. Spain needed no urging to vengeance ; even the Catholic States were inclined to side with the Emperor, thanks to Louis' intrigues with the Turks. In July, 1686, the League of Augsburg took shape ; the Emperor, Spain, Sweden, the Elector of Bavaria, and other German Princes bound themselves to enforce the Treaties of Westphalia, Nimeguen, and Ratisbon, and to resist further aggression on the part of Louis. The league was soon joined by Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, and other Italian Princes. Yet at this moment, when Louis was already involved in a quarrel with the Pope over the right of investiture of the See of Cologne, and was entering upon war with Europe by advancing against the cities of the Rhine, he allowed William of Orange to sail for England and to take possession of the throne of the Stuarts. It was a pardonable error. Louis could not foresee the startling rapidity with which the Protestant Revolution was to be achieved, leaving his inveterate enemy free to direct against him the power which had for so long been bribed into abeyance. Rather he calculated that England and the United Provinces would both be eliminated from the coming struggle. At first it seemed as if that would be the case. Whilst Louvois ravaged and devastated the fair land of the Palatinate, and Catinat overwhelmed Victor Amadeus in Italy (Marsaglia, 1690, 1693) ; whilst the Maréchal de Luxemburg, assisted by the Grand Monarque himself, conducted a successful campaign in the Netherlands (Fleurus, 1690), William had to struggle

with the Jacobite Scots and Irish. France was still mistress of the sea. Her fleets, under Château Renault, defeated the English and Dutch off Bantry Bay, and landed French troops and munitions of war to help James II. in Ireland. In May, 1689, therefore, William declared war with France, on the grounds of her support of James and aggression in New York and Hudson's Bay. The naval successes of the French under Tourville were soon counterbalanced by the Battle of the Boyne (1690). James fled to France, and William was left free to attack Louis by land and sea. Louis turned to take the offensive by invading England. But the Anglo-Dutch fleet dealt a smashing blow to his navy at St. Vaast La Hougue (June 2, 1692). And in the Netherlands William maintained a heroic resistance, always beaten, but never yielding. Though the Duke of Luxemburg might take Namur, and defeat William at Steinkirk (1692) and Neerwinden (1693), these bloody battles only hastened the exhaustion of France. If the allies were jealous and disunited, she was isolated, and was pouring out blood and treasure in Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, on the Rhine, and the high seas at once. D'Estrées scoured the Mediterranean, and Tourville defeated Rooke off Cape St. Vincent, capturing a rich convoy bound for the East. But the victories gained were not sufficiently overwhelming to force a peace. In face of approaching bankruptcy, of bad harvests, and the question of the Spanish succession, Louis was therefore driven to grant it with all the pose of magnanimity he could. He came to terms with the Duke of Savoy, who regained Pignerolo, and then, by the Treaty of Ryswick (September 20, 1697), in act, though not in word, he confessed himself beaten by William and the Coalition of Vienna. He undertook not to help, directly or indirectly, the enemies of the King of England, thus recognizing a Government hateful to him, and

pledging himself to abandon the cause of the Stuarts. He promised to restore to the English their settlements in Hudson's Bay and Newfoundland. Lorraine was given up. Louis kept Strasburg, but restored to the Empire all places outside Alsace occupied during the war and taken by way of reunion. Spain regained Luxemburg and almost all the places taken since Nimeguen ; the Dutch were granted commercial concessions, and restored Pondicherry, which they had captured in 1693.

Louis was now free to prepare for enforcing his claim to the Spanish succession. Spain was exhausted and as moribund as her King, the weakly Charles II., who was tottering, childless, to a premature grave. Among the numerous claimants to the throne, France, in the natural order of succession, had the prior claim. The Grand Dauphin was the nephew of Charles II. But the rights of Anna Maria and of Maria Theresa had been renounced upon their marriage with Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. The conditions of the Treaty of the Pyrenees, however, as we have seen, had not been fulfilled. The rights of sovereignty, it could also be argued, were inalienable ; the Princesses concerned had not acted in full liberty. In any case, France did not intend to respect that renunciation. And yet it was certain that Europe could not sit idly by, whilst Spain was absorbed by the hated French monarchy, and her vast colonies and the Netherlands were added to the possessions of France.

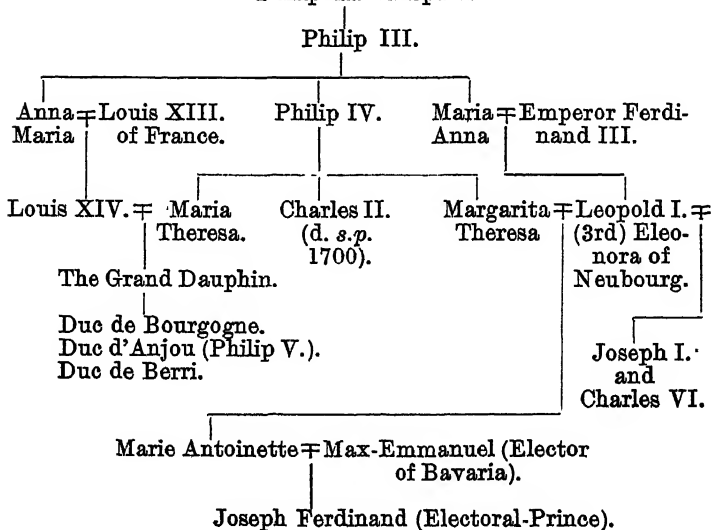
Next to France, ranked the claim of Joseph Ferdinand, Electoral Prince of Bavaria, son of Marie Antoinette, the only daughter of the Emperor Leopold I. of Austria by Margarita Theresa. The latter was the younger sister of Maria Theresa. If the French claims were disallowed, the succession would pass to the German line. But here again there was a renunciation to be considered. Leopold, in marrying his daughter to the Elector of Bavaria, had

renounced her claim. This act was said to be *ultra vires*, and Spain had never recognized it. But, whilst Bavaria held this view, Leopold himself naturally upheld that renunciation, and claimed the throne through his mother, Maria Anna, daughter of Philip III. of Spain, and proposed to transmit it to his second son, the Archduke Charles.*

England and Holland favoured the claim of Joseph Ferdinand as least likely to upset the balance of power, badly poised as it already was.

Whilst the Emperor intrigued at the Court of Spain through Charles' second wife, Maria Anna of Neubourg, who was devoted to the Austrian interest, Louis, keeping his troops ready, but acting with cleverness and moderation, negotiated with the maritime powers (Sept.—Oct., 1698). A Treaty of Partition was signed at the Hague, with England and Holland, by which

* Philip II. of Spain.



it was agreed that the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, or, in the event of his death, his father, should succeed to Spain, the Indies, and Netherlands; the Archduke Charles to the Milanese; and the Dauphin to Naples, Sicily, the Spanish towns on the coast of Tuscany, with the Marquisate of Finale and the province of Giupuzcoa. Upon the news of this Treaty, the Spaniards were indignant at the proposed dismemberment of their country, and Charles II. made a will in favour of the Prince-Electoral (Nov.). At this the Emperor was furious. But three months later the little Prince of Bavaria died. France and Austria were left face to face. Again Louis sought to engage the support of the maritime powers, and a second Treaty of Partition was signed (March, 1700). The adherence of the Emperor was invited, but refused. This treaty provided that Spain, the Indies, and the Netherlands should pass to the Archduke Charles, with the proviso that they should never be united to the Empire; that the Dauphin should have the Duchy of Lorraine, in addition to all that had been assigned to him by the former treaty; and the Duke of Lorraine, in compensation, the Milanese. The effect of either of these arrangements would have been to convert the Mediterranean into a French lake, an object as ardently desired by Louis XIV. as by Napoleon I. Charles and the Spaniards were again enraged when the treaty was communicated to them. In desperate and patriotic hope of avoiding the dismemberment of his Empire and civil war, the Spanish monarch made a final will a month before his death (November 1, 1700), and left all his possessions to a hated Bourbon, the second grandson of the dreaded Louis Philippe, Duc d'Anjou.

Europe was astounded. The Emperor protested; but Louis, to the delight of France, accepted the Spanish Crown for Philip V., and in an outburst of triumph it

was declared that the Pyrenees no longer existed. The Bourbons ruled France and Spain, and Louis, in his overweening pride, took no pains to conceal his intention of ruling the Netherlands. The two crowns were practically united on his head. Neither England nor Holland was willing to fight over the Spanish succession. But Louis' precipitancy forced them into the war which was to be his undoing. Whilst publicly reserving to the Duke of Anjou his rights in the order of succession to the French Crown, he replaced the Dutch garrisons in the Belgian "barrier" towns, which they held by virtue of the Treaty of Ryswick, with French troops. Europe was alarmed; the United Provinces threatened and insulted; it remained to drive England to arms by recognizing the Pretender, upon the death of James II., as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland (September, 1701). This was to denounce the Protestant succession, and to break the Treaty of Ryswick. The influence of the devout Madame de Maintenon and her advisers outweighed the entreaties of all Louis' ministers.

Already the Emperor had entered into a grand alliance with England and Holland at the Hague (September, 1701) to insure the separation of the two crowns, and, if Louis did not prove tractable, to conquer the Spanish Netherlands in order to secure the United Provinces, and the Milanese, Naples, and Sicily, in order to protect Austria and Anglo-Dutch commerce. William III. died on the eve of the declaration of war (May 15, 1702). But the work of Louis' great adversary was almost done. The League was joined by Denmark and the German Princes. England strained every nerve to pour troops and money into the coalition camp, which was directed by Heinsius, Prince Eugène, and Marlborough, the triumvirate of the League.

Campaigns in the Low Countries, Germany, Italy, and

on the Rhine, and the destruction of the French fleet at Vigo (October, 1702), were followed by the accession of Savoy and Portugal to the League. There was now no longer talk of partition ; the Allies determined to place the Archduke Charles upon the Spanish throne in place of Philip V.

And, whilst the enemies of France increased in numbers and determination, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was sorely weakening her within her own borders. The Pope preached a crusade against the *Camisards*, and the Protestants of the Cévennes accepted the help of England and Savoy, only to be crushed and wellnigh exterminated by Villars. So France lost 100,000 of her bravest and most determined citizens. In the field she could only oppose to the genius of Marlborough and Eugène the inferior skill of Tallard, Villars, Villeroy, and Vendôme.

At the beginning of 1704 the French armies, in conjunction with the Elector of Bavaria, were threatening Vienna, when Marlborough, boldly advancing to the Danube, gained the brilliant and overwhelming victory of Blenheim (August 13, 1704), and drove them back beyond the Rhine. Then, returning to Flanders, he manœuvred to secure another crushing victory which should drive the French from the Spanish Netherlands. Louis and Villeroy at length gave him the opportunity he sought. By the Battle of Ramillies (May 23, 1706), the great General achieved his purpose.

Shortly afterwards a victory gained by Prince Eugène over the Duke of Orleans at Turin led to the evacuation of Italy. And the English, in conjunction with the Portuguese, entering Madrid, proclaimed the Archduke Charles King of Spain (June 25, 1706). The year 1707, however, saw Berwick and Orleans victorious in Spain (Almanza, April 25), and the Allies repulsed in an attack upon Provence.

An attempt to create a diversion against England by

an expedition to Scotland with the Pretender (1708) was rendered nugatory by the presence of the English fleet. Then, at Oudenarde (July 11), in the Low Countries, Marlborough and Eugène inflicted another defeat upon the French arms, which were handicapped by the incompetence, if not the cowardice, of Louis' grandson, the Duc de Bourgogne, who shared the command with the Duc de Vendôme. Lille surrendered; the French frontier lay open; Paris was hardly safe; the resources of the country were exhausted. Negotiations for peace were begun, but they were broken off when the Allies insisted that Louis should guarantee that his grandson should evacuate the Spanish throne. "If I am to continue fighting," the Grand Monarque retorted gallantly, "I would rather fight my enemies than my children." In the next campaign that gallant soldier, Villars, and the old Maréchal de Boufflers were beaten at Malplaquet by Marlborough and Eugène, but it was a defeat that was almost as good as a victory (September 11, 1709), so heavy were the losses of the Allies.

It was in the face of such reverses, whilst the military prestige of France was being shattered and her resources crippled, that the aged monarch showed himself in his most kingly light. His courage, determination, and resource never wavered. His plate was melted down, and the treasures of Versailles pledged; the coinage was debased. And yet when, after a series of bad harvests, the financiers refused to advance a penny, Louis invited Samuel Bernard, the great banker, to Versailles, and there the coolness of the King and the splendour of the Court so impressed the financier that he engaged his vast fortune in the royal service to his own undoing. Criticism of the despot, of his ruinous wars, and incompetent Generals, was vigorously suppressed by the royal police which held Paris in terror.

And now, as if to reward the King's determination, the sun at last broke through the dark clouds which had overcast the sky of French policy. Sacheverell and Mrs. Masham achieved what all the warriors and statesmen of Versailles had failed to do. Marlborough fell. A change came over the policy of England. The Tories clamoured for peace. The English suspended hostilities, and Conferences were opened at Utrecht at the beginning of 1712. But the Dutch and Imperialists were still eager to continue the war, and were threatening Paris. Louis despatched Villars to dispute the way with them, counselling him, if he were defeated, to retire behind the Somme, and promising then to join him at Péronne, there to make a last effort to save the State or perish, "for I will never consent to allow the enemy to approach my capital." Villars, by a last great effort at Denain (July 24, 1712), hurled the enemy back. The victory brought the flush of new hope to France. A treaty was concluded with England, and, in view of her defection, the allies were forced to come to terms.

One of the difficulties in arriving at conditions of peace was to insure a valid renunciation of the claims of France and Spain, so that the two crowns should never be united. The monarch's word could clearly no longer be relied on. The English demanded the formal consent of the States General, but the autocrat of France would not hear of this. The allies had to be content with the solemn registration of the renunciation in the *Parlement* of Paris and the Cortes of Spain. By the Peace of Utrecht (April 11, 1713), separate treaties were entered into with England, Holland, Portugal, the Duke of Savoy, and the King of Prussia. The Emperor alone was obdurate. In the English agreement Louis recognized the Protestant succession, and undertook to harbour the Stuarts no more. He promised to destroy the fortifications and port of

Dunkirk, whence privateers had so sorely damaged English commerce, and to surrender Hudson's Bay and Straits, Acadie (Nova Scotia), St. Kitt's, and Newfoundland, retaining the right of the French to fish and cure their catch on the side of that island known as the "Petit-Nord." Some hostile tariffs were removed, and commercial relations generally were re-established as in 1664.

In the treaty with the United Provinces, Louis renounced all claim to the Spanish Netherlands, and handed them over to the Dutch, until an agreement should be arrived at with Austria. A successful campaign by Villars in Germany and on the Rhine brought the Emperor to terms (Treaty of Rastadt, March, 1714). To compensate him for the abandonment of his claim to Spain, the Austrian was given Milan, Naples, the Tuscan towns, and Sardinia, as well as the Spanish Netherlands, the Dutch retaining the right to garrison the towns which formed the "barrier" against France (Namur, Tournai, Ypres, etc.). Louis retained Lille and French Flanders, as well as Alsace (including Strasburg). He recognized the Elector of Brandenburg's title as King of Prussia, and his sovereignty over Neuchâtel and Valengin; to Portugal he ceded territory in dispute on the frontiers of Brési and the French Guyane; and to Victor Amedeus restored Nice and Savoy, receiving, in return for some territory on the Piedmont side, the Valley of Barcelonnette. He promised him the kingdom of Sicily and the succession to the Spanish throne in the event of the extinction of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain.

As the result of all his ambitious efforts, Louis had made a small addition to French territory,* but, in doing so, he had gambled away the prestige of France and ruined her finances. "I have been too fond of war. Do not imitate me in that, nor in my excessive expenditure." So the

* French Flanders, Strasburg, and the Franche-Comté.



Aug. Rischgitz.

LOUIS XV. (1715-1774).

From the picture by Charles Andreu Vanloo at Versailles.

aged monarch confessed his failure, when on his death-bed he handed on the task of autocracy to his sole surviving legitimate descendant, Louis XV., a beautiful child of five. But whilst France was thus weakened ; whilst her invincible army had been beaten again and again, her fleet destroyed, her colonies crippled ; and whilst her people were starving, England, Protestant, united and free, had risen to be the foremost maritime Power. In Austria the House of Hapsburg had lost Spain, but gained the Netherlands and much in Italy, and, whilst retaining the title of Emperor and the European complications it involved, had almost succeeded by this time in winning Hungary from the Turks. And the new sun of Prussia was rising above the horizon of the Rhine. Frederick-William I. was beginning to prepare the army and resources of Frederick the Great.

Louis the Great died on September 1, 1715. He had lived seventy-seven years, reigned seventy-two, and governed for fifty-four. All the warnings of Colbert had been ignored. In the absence of economy, his predictions were verified. By 1715 the annual expenditure almost doubled the receipts of the Treasury. The country was practically bankrupt. Flourishing in her prime with her great King, says Martin, France had grown old with him. For the rest of the century we have to watch the process of her dissolution as a monarchy, prior to her new birth as a sovereign nation, free and democratic, and guided by a people's will, however vacillating.

XXI

THE REGENCY

(LOUIS XV., A.D. 1715—1774)

LOUIS XV. was the second child of the Dauphin, the Duke of Burgundy, of whose achievements as King high hopes had been formed, only to be shattered by his sudden death in 1711. To settle the problem of the Regency during the long minority of his great-grandson, Louis XIV. had made provisions in a will drawn up with great pains, but destined, as he himself foretold, to be put aside in a day. Louis loved his bastard, the Duke of Maine, and appointed him to be guardian of the child-King. He distrusted the natural Regent, his nephew, the Duke of Orleans,* who had long lived in dissipation and disgrace. To control him, he appointed a co-optative Council of Regency, over which he was to preside. The Regent was clever, cultivated, cynical, without ambition, and without respect for any principle or ideal. Liberal in outlook, he was mentally suited to a new age. His ability was as undoubted as his unbridled gaiety. He had a rapid insight into men. But he dissipated his energies in frivolity, and shattered his powers of concentration and work by continual drunkenness and debauchery. He was capable, however, of sudden flashes of courage and resolution, and upon Louis' death at once asserted his right to full control of the government, and, led by the Duc de

* Son of Philippe, Duke of Orleans, by his second wife.

St. Simon and his old tutor, the clever but disreputable Abbé Dubois, he carried the day. In a sharp struggle with the party of the Duc de Maine, Madame de Maintenon, and the ultramontanes, backed by the Pope and Spain, he was supported by all the elements of opposition to the régime of Louis XIV., by the Jansenists, the *Parlement*, the Peers, and the English Hanoverians. The fight was soon over. The will of Louis was at once set aside, and at a Bed of Justice held by the infant King the Duke of Orleans was made Regent, with the right of appointing a Council of his own choice. The Duke of Maine was entrusted with the education of the King.

Under the Regent's liberal administration there was a momentary revolt against absolutism. The example of the political liberty of England was regarded by many with longing eyes. But there were in France no institutions left on which to base constitutional government. The path of reform could not be trodden in a day. And the Regent lacked the energy, the sincerity, and the application to work out the salvation of his country. Some faltering steps, however, were taken in that direction. *Parlement* received back its right of remonstrance, taxes were lowered, inter-provincial restrictions upon trade were removed, roads were built, the persecuted Jansenists were released from the Bastille, and the Secretaries of State were replaced by seven departmental Councils, chiefly composed of the *noblesse d'épée* and the *noblesse de robe*.

Manners experienced a still more striking reaction. Under Louis XIV., in his enfeebled old age, when his piety was stimulated by the devout severity of Madame de Maintenon, the Court, in St. Simon's phrase, had "sweated hypocrisy." The boredom of official austerity could only be relieved by secret debauches. Under the Regent, as at the Restoration, immorality became a

matter of *bon ton*, and intoxication the fashion. Every courtier prided himself on imitating the example of reckless excess and cynical freedom of conversation set by the Regent and his *roués*, his boon companions, and the abandoned ladies of his Court, such as the Duchesse de Berry, at his *petits soupers* at the Palais Royal, and *bals masqués* at the opera. It was in such an atmosphere of free thinking and loose living that a young poet, Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet), began his career by being consigned to the Bastille for a satire on the memory of Louis XIV. His tragedies, with their lightly veiled ironies against religion and royalty, reflected the free conversation of the Regent's own table, and announced the philosophy of the new century. It was in the Paris of these days that Watteau painted on his exquisite canvases the artificial life of that fashionable world, in all its false luxury, in a period of brilliant extravagance and paper credit.

When the Grand Monarque died, the revenue had been anticipated for nearly three years. State promissory notes circulated at only one-quarter of their face value. The financial position was so difficult that St. Simon urged out-and-out bankruptcy as the only royal road to solvency. The remedy was deemed too heroic. Some economies were effected, and rearrangements on the old lines, including a debasement of the coinage, contrary to the pledges of Louis XIV. and the Regent himself, were made by the Duc de Noailles, and then by the Marquis d'Argenson. For the Regent first appointed the terrible Lieutenant of Police Chancellor, in order to overawe the *Parlement*, and then President of the Council of Finance, in order that the Scotsman, John Law, might have a free hand to apply his panacea of credit and paper money to the financial sores of the nation. That handsome Scottish adventurer had learned something of finance in England,

Italy, and Amsterdam. Gambler by nature, sanguine and ambitious, he was a man of large ideas, with a genius for figures. The philosophy at which he had arrived, through much calculation and experience, and which he poured into the receptive mind of the Regent, was an exaggeration of half-truths. Money, he argued, was the root of all prosperity ; multiply your currency, and you enrich the nation and increase its commerce. To increase your currency cheaply, and to the desired extent, there is nothing like paper. He proposed, therefore—and it was in this that his originality consisted—to apply to the State the principles upon which he had found that private banks were flourishing all over Europe. He wished to found a State bank, which was to be the sole banker and trader of France, using the credit of the depositors to develop the resources and enterprises of the country, and issuing paper currency to stimulate and increase its productiveness. This “system,” rejected by the Duc de Noailles, was applied successfully by Law in the case of a private discount bank, with a right to issue notes payable at first to bearer, which he obtained permission to establish in 1716. In concurrence with it he established in the following year the *Compagnie d’Occident*, popularly known as the Mississippi Company, to develop under an exclusive charter the colony of Louisiana. This colony, at the mouth of the Mississippi, had been founded by La Salle and D’Iberville (1682). The monopoly of its trade had long been enjoyed by Antoine Crozat. That trade was languishing. Law, perceiving its possibilities, now acquired the right to take it over and float a company for its development, financed by the bank.

The latter proved so successful that it was presently converted into a royal bank, with Law as director (December, 1718). *Parlement*, which was busy with an endeavour to establish a veto upon legislation by

refusing to register edicts, remonstrated, and attacked Law, but was reduced to silence by a Bed of Justice held at the Tuileries (August, 1718).

The shares in the new company were only purchasable with State paper, and were negotiable at sight. Speculation was soon rife, and as the demand increased, stimulated by many ingenious manœuvres, all tending at the same time to extend the operations and monopolies of the State bank and its companies, the price of the shares rose and rose, and the bank profited accordingly. Once embarked upon this fatal path, the course of the boom could not be checked without producing the inevitable crash. The longer it was delayed, the greater must be the disaster. But the most ingenious devices and the wildest edicts followed one another in bewildering succession in order to gain time. The fever of speculation spread from Paris to the provinces and foreign countries. Everybody crowded to the capital, eager to buy and sell shares, and make a fortune in a day. In the Rue Quincampoix, the Stock Exchange of the bank, valets, countrymen, and cooks jostled with lords and ladies, and passed all-night vigils in the streets in the hope of profiting by the market in the morning. A hunchback made a fortune by hiring his hump to the speculators to sign their shares upon. Law was appointed Contrôleur-Général des Finances ; his house and private rooms were besieged by applicants for shares (1720).

But time is needed to make a colony a paying concern. The sweepings of the gaols and hospitals were shipped out to populate it, and there forcibly married to innocent girls seized by press-gangs. But the public could not wait for the operations of Nature to take effect in the plantations of Louisiana. As the price of the shares was forced up, the amount of money required to pay a dividend sufficiently large to keep them up to their inflated value

became enormous. The notes of the royal bank were issued to an unlimited amount, against no adequate reserve of gold, and its assets were not realizable. The moment, therefore, that the price of the shares began to fall, the panic, in a country quite uneducated in the operations of the Stock Exchange, was prodigious. A run on the bank began ; half the speculators were ruined. Law's carriage was mobbed, and that financial enthusiast fled penniless from France (December, 1720). Amidst universal panic, the bank was abolished. Its creditors were paid a few shillings in the pound, and a mighty mass of papers was burned in the bank court, the *auto-da-fé* of a "system" which had developed too quickly and evaded the control of its author. All, however, was not loss. L'Orient and New Orleans remain to remind us of the genius of the man who called those flourishing ports into being in the two hemispheres. Agriculture profited by the general rise in prices, and in the hey-day of speculation there had been a redistribution of wealth which was socially and economically beneficial. Whilst cooks and valets rose to riches in a day, and disported themselves, bedecked in diamonds, at the opera, many ruined nobles had also seized the opportunity of redressing their fortunes. The great outburst of luxury which accompanied these new riches was evanescent ; the stimulus given to trade by Law's operations and ideas was lasting.

In the less exciting region of administration, the expedient of government by *bureaux*, through the departmental Councils, soon failed. Whilst the *gens d'épée* quarrelled with the *gens de robe*, and once more proved their own incompetence to take a share in government, the people remained indifferent to a reform which merely interfered with the established despotism, without giving them a voice in affairs. There was discontent with despotism, indeed, but mainly because there was no

capable and benevolent despot to carry it on. So by degrees the administration drifted back to the system of Secretaries of State and the absolutism of Louis XIV., with the Abbé Dubois as Chief Minister. Under him there was a renewal of ultramontaniam and of the persecution of the Jansenists. The Bull *Unigenitus* was accepted by the Grand Council, and its registration was the price paid by *Parlement* for release from the exile at Pontoise, to which the Regent had condemned the recalcitrant Courts.

Unscrupulous, clever, debauched, and avaricious, a libertine with an immense power of work, Dubois raised himself from the dregs of the people to the summit of his ambition ; he became a Cardinal and the First Minister of France. He had made his mark as director of her foreign affairs. Spain, renewing her youth under Alberoni, was preparing to reassert herself, and to undo the Treaty of Utrecht. Philip V. detested the Regent, whom he regarded with the utmost jealousy and suspicion. For he blocked the way of the Spanish King to the French throne, and trod upon his heels in the succession to the throne of Spain. The Regent had begun by pursuing the policy of Louis XIV. ; he had helped the Pretender in his attempt upon England in the '15, and harboured him on his return. This was to keep France in danger and isolation. She had need of England's aid against Spain. Dubois conducted, with great skill, the difficult negotiations to this end, and, consenting to abandon the Pretender and the Fort of Mardick, which was being converted into a second Dunkirk, arranged the Triple Alliance of England, France, and Holland in January, 1717. That alliance was joined in the following year by the Emperor, with whom Spain had imprudently fallen out, thanks to the aggression of Elizabeth Farnese in Italy. A good pretext for declaring war with Spain was

soon found. A conspiracy against the Regent, entered into by the Duchesse de Maine* and the Spanish Ambassador, Cellamare, was detected by Dubois. The papers of the Ambassador were seized, and war with Spain declared by England (December 28) and France (January 9, 1719). Under the able leadership of the Duke of Berwick, son of James II., the French invaded Spain, and captured Fontarabia and St. Sebastian. Philip, whose troops were in Sicily, was reduced to declaring himself King of France, and calling upon the French to join him. His attempts to create a diversion in Scotland and Brittany failed. Alberoni was sacrificed, and, Philip having declared his adherence to the Quadruple Alliance, the reconciliation presently ripened into a new Triple Alliance between England, France, and Spain (March, 1721). To cement his friendship with France, and to prepare the way for his contemplated abdication, Philip V. exchanged Princesses with her. The Infanta Maria Anna Victoria, a child of three, was betrothed to Louis XV., a boy of eleven, and the eldest son of the King of Spain to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, the Regent's daughter. This arrangement was upset by the deaths of Dubois and the Regent (1723). The Duc de Bourbon then became Minister, a stupid Prince, guided by his mistress, that "slyph-like beauty," the Marquise de Prie, and a rich contractor, one Pâris-Duverney." The dread of keeping the succession open for the Duke of Orleans decided them to break off the Spanish match. Louis was a well-grown boy of fifteen years, spoilt, indolent, blasé, cruel, and without natural affections, whose intemperate passion for hunting occasionally caused him violent attacks of illness. If he died without an heir, the Duke

* Much to the scandal of the Peers, Louis XIV. had legitimized the Duc de Maine and his other bastards as Princes of the Blood. They had now been reduced from the rank of Prince to that of Peer, to the great indignation of the Duchess.

of Orleans would succeed, and probably plunge the country into civil war. The little Spanish Infanta was therefore sent back to Madrid, to the great indignation of the Spaniards. Religion barred an English marriage. Maria, daughter of Stanislaus Leszczinski, the dispossessed King of Poland, was chosen to be Louis' bride (September 5, 1725). She was older than the King, ugly and poor. Her very insignificance promised to render her grateful for her promotion to Bourbon and his mistress.

The irritation of the Spaniards led to an alliance between Spain and Austria. Then the dread of a Hapsburg predominance suddenly revived. The alliance of Hanover was formed between England, France, and Prussia (September, 1725), joined in the following year by Holland. The object of this alliance was to maintain the balance of power in Europe, threatened, as it seemed, by the proposed marriage of Don Carlos with Maria Theresa.

Bourbon's ministry was a series of blunders ; his extravagance had increased taxation till Duverney had been obliged to revive the universal income-tax of 2 per cent., and roused the protests of the clergy against a breach of their immunity, and of the *Parlement* against the registration of financial edicts in a Bed of Justice. Bourbon's government was felt to be of a provisional nature. But it might have lasted for a long time had he not tried to get rid of Fleury. Fleury was the King's tutor, and his influence over his pupil was so great that it was popularly attributed to magic. In trying that fall, the Minister was himself thrown. Fleury took up the reins (June 11, 1726), and the mild old tutor became the real ruler of France through the Council which he was to dominate for so many years as Minister of State.

Louis XV., a handsome youth of good abilities, sullen

and *farouche*, devoted all his energies, first to his hounds, and afterwards to his hounds and his mistresses. Pushed into infidelity, in the hope that it might save him from his chronic boredom and the excessive fatigue of hunting, he extended his attentions from Madame de Mailly to Madame de Vintimille, her sister, and then to an ever-widening circle of mistresses, when Madame de Pompadour submitted to his pleasure the inmates of the Parc-aux-Cerfs. But he confessed regularly, and a touch of rheumatism would make him brood gloomily over his sins. As a ruler, he was a *roi-fainéant*, confident that the monarchy would last his time.

The future of the kingdom depended upon whether Fleury could, as he desired, keep France at peace, indulge her in the rest-cure he prescribed, and give her time, as Walpole gave England, to recuperate and develop, after the wars and extravagance of Louis XIV., the fever and upset of Law's system, and the subsequent partial bankruptcy.

So long as peace was maintained, the old Cardinal, though ignorant of finance, at least managed to economize sufficiently to keep expenses within revenue, whilst the Colonial trade was being developed. But even so the mass of the people were upon the verge of starvation. There were famine riots in 1740; D'Argenson said that more Frenchmen died of starvation between 1738 and 1740 than in all the wars of Louis XIV. The preposterous financial system could only lead to bankruptcy and the downfall of the monarchy. That end was hastened by the foolish foreign policy upon which France now embarked.

Fleury wisely wished to keep peace with Spain and Austria, and to maintain the alliance with England, and he succeeded for a while, in spite of the opposition of Chauvelin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who sup-

ported the traditional, but outworn, policy of an alliance with Spain and war with Austria. War, indeed, was forced upon him in connection with the Polish Succession, but that was a war of negotiation and armistice rather than of arms (1733). The election of Stanislaus Leszczinski, the father-in-law of Louis XV., to the Crown of Poland, at the instigation of the French Court, was countered by Russia and Austria, who intervened on behalf of Augustus, Elector of Saxony. France, supported by Spain and the King of Sardinia, declared war. After prolonged negotiations, it was agreed (Treaty of Vienna, November, 1738) that Augustus of Saxony should receive the Crown of Poland, and Leszczinski the Duchy of Lorraine, which upon his death was to revert formally to the French Crown. The Duke of Lorraine was to receive compensation in the shape of Tuscany, and the Spanish Bourbons obtained Naples.

So far the policy of fishing in troubled waters had proved very successful. Another opportunity equally tempting soon presented itself. For during this period hardly a pretence of public right guarded the State system of Europe. What Queen Caroline wittily observed of the Triple Alliance was equally true of the other combinations of the age. It always put her in mind, she said, of the South Sea scheme—people went into it knowing that it was all a cheat, but hoping to get something out of it, everybody meaning, when he had made his own fortune, to be the first in scrambling away, and each thinking himself sharp enough to be able to leave his fellow-adventurers in the lurch.

The War of the Austrian Succession (1740) arose out of the anxiety of the Emperor, Charles VI., to establish a law of succession (the Pragmatic Sanction) in Austria, and by rendering it retrospective to secure the throne for his daughter, Maria Theresa. None of the European

States, except Bavaria, who claimed the succession for her Elector, was genuinely concerned in the matter. But Frederick the Great, who succeeded to the throne of Prussia and an army strongly organized for war a few months before the death of Charles, saw his opportunity, and took it. His object was clear and limited. He intended to take Silesia and absorb it. But he needed an ally, and opened negotiations at Versailles. Louis XV., indolent and timid, had little to do with the Government, only occasionally interfering in foreign affairs at the instigation of a mistress (Madame de Châteauroux). Cardinal Fleury was too old for the business of war; he had given a guarded recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction at the Treaty of Vienna, and he knew that the finances of the country rendered peace imperative. But his influence was on the wane, and there was a war party at Court, headed by the Comte de Belle Isle, who was eager to command an army. Frederick's offer was tempting. Bavaria would join them, and probably Spain; the Austrians would have no allies. The work of Richelieu would be completed. The old enemy would be crushed, and France would be rewarded with the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium). She swallowed the bait. The war party triumphed, not realizing the condition of the Treasury, and not suspecting that Frederick would play false. France played the Prussian game against Austria now, and then, in the Seven Years' War, the Austrian game against Prussia, so frittering away her strength and losing her colonies for her pains.

When, therefore, Charles VI. died suddenly in October, 1740, and Frederick entered Silesia, France, Bavaria, and Spain declared for him. The position of Austria looked hopeless. The French drove her out of Bohemia. By October, 1741, Vienna was untenable, and the Austrian army had almost disappeared. Austria was saved by the

intervention of England* and by the action of the Hungarians, who, in answer to the dramatic appeal of Maria Theresa, took the field on her behalf. Even so Vienna must have fallen, had Frederick co-operated with the French Generals. But he did not intend to help France to gain the Netherlands. He chose rather to make a secret convention with Maria Theresa, followed by a formal peace, whilst the Elector of Bavaria, who had been chosen Emperor (Charles VII.) also entered into a convention of neutrality with her (1742). Thus left in the lurch, the French were beaten by the Hungarian army, and locked up in Prague, whence Belle Isle effected a famous retreat, forcing his way out by the Beraun Valley to Eger, but only after suffering terrible hardships and heavy losses (December, 1742-43).

But the French, still hungering for the Netherlands, continued the war. The Grand Alliance of 1701 was reconstituted. The fiction that France and England were at peace was, indeed, still maintained. But the "Pragmatic army," consisting of Anglo-Dutch-Hanoverian troops under George II., beat the French at Dettingen (1743), and drove them out of Hanover and the Netherlands. In the following year the French overran Flanders, until their career was checked by an Austrian invasion of Alsace. At the same time an English fleet, in spite of a reverse at Toulon, held the Franco-Spanish fleet powerless in the Mediterranean. Then Frederick, not wishing Austria to gain too great an advantage, struck at Bohemia, and compelled her to withdraw her troops from Alsace. The next year saw heavy fighting in the Netherlands and Bohemia. The Pragmatic army was defeated at Fontenoy (1745), where Louis XV. won immense popularity with his martial people by his courageous conduct on

* England was already at war with Spain. She could not tolerate French aggression in the Netherlands, and was herself casting longing eyes on the French colonies.

the battle-field. Ensued the "'45," which paralyzed English action for six months. Frederick, content, retired from the war (Treaty of Dresden). But the French were not satisfied merely to have been used as his cat's-paw. Having gained the upper hand in the Netherlands, they meant to complete their conquest. So for three years the war dragged on, until, in October, 1748, the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed, on the basis of the *status quo ante* for all the Powers, except Prussia, which kept Silesia. France restored the Austrian Netherlands. She was forced to this lame conclusion, because Austria, financed by England, could have continued the war for a year or two. France would have been bankrupt in six months, and her colonies were at stake. A pause was imperative.

For the struggle for Colonial and naval supremacy had begun definitely when France declared war with England in March, 1744. In the following year the English seized Louisburg, and the New England Militia captured Cape Breton. And though the French took Madras in 1746, the victories of Anson and Hawke in the Bay of Biscay prevented their reinforcements from reaching Canada and the Indies. The English navy, which was at this time almost double that of France, was sweeping the French mercantile marine from off the seas, and rapidly increasing the financial distress of the country. The English, indeed, had clearly seen that the fight for supremacy must be waged in the Western Seas and the Indian Ocean; the French people, though they had given some attention to their Navy in view of the coming struggle, were by nature and tradition more concerned with the conflict on the Continent.

The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle satisfied neither France nor England. In America the colonists of the rival nations were determined to fight to a finish. The struggle

there began on the morrow of the peace, over the vaguely defined boundaries of Nova Scotia.

The French Government, seeing that war was inevitable, prepared for it. But their preparations, whilst strengthening them, hastened the war they wished to defer. They sent out fresh troops, and began to make good their vast vague claims to the valleys of the Mississippi and Ohio by building and garrisoning a line of forts from Canada to Louisiana. This move threatened to cut off the English from the West, and in the end to drive them into the sea. In response, though England did not act directly, the colonists, much perturbed, obtained leave to make an attempt to destroy the threatening forts (1754). They were beaten by the trained French soldiers. Negotiations ensued, and were not broken off till 1756, when war was finally declared. Fighting had been going on all the time, but England had not used her sea-power. The French opened with successes in the Mediterranean, capturing Minorca and landing in Corsica. But in the following year they made the fatal mistake of allowing themselves to be dragged into the Seven Years' War. They needed every penny for their struggle with England. As it was, their foolish action on the Continent made England's triumph unnecessarily complete. It was always inevitable, because of her overwhelming naval superiority.

In preparation for the struggle, and in order to secure Hanover and the Netherlands, England had entered into a defensive alliance, first with Russia, and then with Prussia. The Russian Empress, who hated Frederick, thereupon denounced her convention with England, and made overtures to Austria. Kaunitz, the Austrian Minister, determined to recover Silesia, had long been working through Madame Pompadour,* Louis' new

* Fleury had died in 1743. The "Regency of Pompadour" dates from about 1747. She was exceedingly unpopular on account of her extravagance.



Aug. Rischgitt

THE COMTE DE MIRABEAU. *Pages 335-350.*

Died 1791.

From a painting by Bosc at Versailles.

heroic efforts of Montcalm, the fall of Louisburg was followed by Wolfe's capture of Quebec (September, 1759)—a brilliant feat of arms, only rendered possible by the predominance of the English fleet. The French possessions about the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes passed to the English. By 1762 France only retained Louisiana, Cayenne, and half St. Domingo.

As in America France can boast the names of Champlain and Montcalm, so in India she was served by great explorers and pioneers like François Marten and Dupleix. Soldier, statesman, and diplomatist of extraordinary energy and ability, the latter became Governor of Pondicherry in 1751. His policy was to expel the English from the Coromandel coast by combinations with the native rulers. But here again the supremacy of the English at sea decided the issue. The disaster of Wandiwash echoed Hawke's victory at Quiberon Bay. Whilst Robert Clive rose to win India for his Company, the French East India Company, at the end of their resources, had been compelled to recall Dupleix (1754), whose schemes were involving them in heavy debt. By January, 1763, the fall of Pondicherry had put an end to the French occupation of India.

The French Minister, the Duc de Choiseul, seeing bankruptcy staring him in the face, had long been anxious for peace. But Pitt would not yield an inch. Choiseul sought for fresh support in the "Family Compact," by which the French and Spanish Bourbons guaranteed each other's possessions (August 15, 1761). It was part of a larger scheme by which Choiseul hoped in vain to construct a great Catholic League to crush Protestant Prussia and England. The "Family Compact," joined also by the King of the Two Sicilies and the Duke of Parma, was a diplomatic event of equal importance with the Reversal of Alliances at the beginning of the war,

but it was foolish, since Spain could lend but little military help. Its chief effect was to enrich England at the expense of Spain, when the fall of Pitt prepared the way for the inevitable and disastrous peace. By the Treaty of Paris (February 10, 1763) France recovered Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Belle Isle, taken during the war, in exchange for Minorca. In India she was allowed to retain a few trading stations, including Chandernagore and Pondicherry ; in America a few fishing rights. She ceded Canada and Cape Breton, the isles of the St. Lawrence, the Valley of the Ohio, and the left bank of the Mississippi ; in the West Indies, Dominica, St. Vincent, Tobago, Grenada, and the Grenadines, as well as Senegal. To recover Havana, which the English had taken, Spain ceded Florida to them, and received in exchange Louisiana from France. Such were the firstfruits of the Family Compact. Even so they were less to the advantage of England than the military situation warranted.

Choiseul affected to regard the acquisition of Corsica (purchased from the Genoese in 1768) as compensation for the loss of Canada. Talleyrand described him as "one of the most prophetically-minded men of our generation." In action he was blundering and inconsequent, but he anticipated Napoleon in conceiving Egypt as a French province, and instituting a new French Empire in Southern America. And foreseeing that the American colonies, freed from the fear of the French, would soon break off from England, he prepared for revenge by labouring to restore the army and navy, and strengthening the bonds of the Family Compact. Like other Ministers of this period, his position depended upon the favour of favourites. He had risen through the patronage of the Pompadour, and fell through the resentment of Madame du Barry when on the eve of plunging into war with England

(December, 1770). It was with the object of preventing Austria from allying herself with Prussia in the coming war that he had concluded, in this year, the marriage of the Dauphin, grandson of Louis XV., with the elegant and vivacious Archduchess of Austria, Marie Antoinette.

He was succeeded by a Ministry of mediocrities, the Duc d'Aiguillon, the Abbé Terray, and M. de Maupéou, a triumvirate supported by Madame du Barry and the adherents of the Jesuits. Their chief exploit was the destruction of the *Parlements*. For the last twenty years the *Parlement* of Paris, in the absence of the States General, had been attempting to play a political rôle, and to convert its right of remonstrance into real control over the royal edicts and taxation. At one time their opposition was rewarded with banishment to Pontoise (1753), at other times they were compelled to adopt edicts for extraordinary taxation in the presence of the King. In their protest against the "deluge of taxes" in 1764, Voltaire beheld the seeds of coming revolution. But, in fact, the magistrates were not prepared for reforms which affected their own pockets, or which did not add to their monopoly of the administration of justice.

Maupéou, the new Chancellor, entered eagerly on the task of consolidating the absolute monarchy by destroying the *Parlements*. On January 21, 1771, the Parisian *Parlement* was again exiled, and a new *Parlement* substituted, composed of Maupéou's nominees. Its jurisdiction was curtailed by the constitution of six other Courts of Justice. The provincial *Parlements* were treated in the same fashion. The sale of legal offices was done away with, and justice proclaimed free to all. So far the reform was beneficial. The *Parlements*, however, were restored in the first year of Louis XVI. It was soon

evident that they intended to wage war against the authority of the Crown.

In 1774 Louis XV. died of smallpox. His people, who had exhibited the utmost solicitude during his illness in 1744, displayed utter indifference at his death, so alienated were their affections by a life devoted to hunting and debauchery, whilst France was falling out of account in the Councils of Europe.

XXII

THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION (LOUIS XVI., A.D. 1774—1789)

THE humiliation of the Peace of Paris echoed the disastrous conduct of the war. It brought bitterly home to France that she had lost her Colonial Empire, and that her navy and finances were ruined. It reflected the achievement of an army of demoralized, tax-eating courtiers, incompetent Generals, and rebellious troops, of a country administered by a rotten bureaucracy, and a policy directed by the low-born and extravagant mistresses of a brutalized and sensual King. France, famine-stricken and bankrupt, could forgive financial bungling, and endure material misery. Her extraordinary natural wealth and the spirit of her people could always enable her to recover with incredible rapidity from the most staggering blows ; but to be humbled before Europe was unendurably galling to a nation ever proud of her military prowess, and long accustomed to dictate to Europe. The influence of the monarchy had received a blow from which it was never to recover.

Louis XV. had taken enough interest in foreign policy to handicap his Ministers, and to deserve part of the odium of their failure. The saying attributed to him—*Après moi le déluge*—is typical of his cynical and slothful egoism. The lethargy and depravity, of which the King was the supreme exemplar, had affected every department

of national life, demoralizing the army and the French India Company, paralyzing Ministers and tradesmen alike.

The spectacle of an incompetent, idle, and self-indulgent aristocracy, supported by a paid, privileged, persecuting, and corrupt higher clergy, helped to spread the new Ideas which were to give birth to the new Facts of the century.

The stream of these ideas ran in two converging channels—on the one hand was the anti-religious teaching of Voltaire, a reforming Conservative who aimed at destroying the Church, whilst preserving an intelligent despotism; on the other were the Philosophical Economists, such as Montesquieu, Diderot, Rousseau, D'Alembert. All were inspired by the English political philosophers, Bacon and Locke, and by the example of English constitutional freedom.

The spirit of reaction against the despotism of Louis XIV. had been expressed in the brilliant and daring *Lettres Persanes* of Montesquieu. In 1748 appeared his *Esprit des Lois*, in which, whilst exhibiting the principles from which human laws proceed, he criticized the political and social arrangements of France in the light of a liberal intellect, deeply influenced by admiration for the British Constitution. The book was denounced by Jansenists and Jesuits alike; but there have been few greater works in any language for breadth of view, originality of outlook, and influence upon thought.

The first volume of the *Encyclopædia*, mainly the work of Diderot and D'Alembert, and based on the English *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, appeared in 1751. It was characteristic of the weakness of the Government that the completed work was forbidden to appear in 1759, and allowed in 1765. In the interval the King, yielding to the *Parlement* and Jansenists, backed by public opinion, had

consented to the suppression of the Society of Jesuits (1761-62) ; whilst a fresh outburst of persecution of the Protestants had given point to the writings of Voltaire and the philosophers.

Roused by the judicial persecution of Protestants, like Jean Calas, Sirven and La Barre, and inspired by English ideas of liberty and tolerance, Voltaire zealously championed their cause. In a series of telling pamphlets he attacked, with a bitter smile and mocking irony, and a terrible lucidity of style and logic, the exclusive domination of Catholicism in France, and urged the Encyclopædists to "crush the infamy" of intolerant superstition. Incidentally, he proclaimed the need of a reform of the magistracy, and of the atrocious system of criminal jurisprudence. To the fanaticism of the united Church and State, he and the philosophers opposed the ideas of toleration, liberty, equality, and humanity.

Enemies of Ecclesiasticism, the Encyclopædists put their trust in the natural goodness of mankind. Basing their system on such theoretical optimism, without overmuch regard to facts, they hoped to deduce from Reason a political science, upon which a just and equitable society could be established. Praise of labour, in all its forms, is one of the chief features of the *Encyclopædia*, and was one of the first symptoms of a return to Nature, and a revolt against the claims of an idle and artificial Nobility. The goodness of the citizen, according to Diderot and his disciples, depended on, and followed from, the goodness of the laws. The simple deduction from this teaching was revolutionary : that all faults in the citizen and the State are the product of bad government, and chargeable to those who govern. Reform these, and society will at once enter on the millennium. Upon such theorizing the history of the Revolution is the grimmest of all possible commentaries.

The path of this desired reform was indicated by the policy of extreme democratic decentralization advocated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He supplemented the reason of the philosophers by an appeal to the emotions, compelling conviction, and rousing excitement through the charm of his sentimental outlook, and the vibrating quality of his style. Rousseau pictured primitive man as, morally and socially, the perfect being. This absurd paradox captivated by its appeal to the sentiments of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and by its glorification of agriculture, manual labour, and the simple life. In his *Contrat Social* (1762) he supplied a waiting nation with a new creed. Society, according to this investigation, was the result of a bargain for mutual protection, based on the condition that the individual subjects himself to the general will, which is Sovereign. Rulers are, therefore, only the delegates of the people.

Such were the ideas disseminated through the *salons*, the letter-writers, and an ineffectively censored press, ideas which captivated the educated classes and presently filtered down to their suffering subordinates.

Welcomed by the nobles and ecclesiastics, these ideas shook their belief in the legitimacy of their own privileges; read by the ambitious commons, and repeated by their orators to the populations of the great towns, they encouraged them to claim a part in political life; filtering through to the ignorant country folk, their echo awoke in them at least a confused sense of the injustice of the suffering and poverty which overwhelmed them. For it was the educated Liberals, recruited from the ranks of the nobility and the Church, who led the revolutionary movement, and were followed by the uncivilized mass of townsfolk and peasants. It was the educated aristocrats who applauded to the echo Beaumarchais' bitter railings against the injustice and in-

equalities of society, when the *Mariage de Figaro*, long censored, was at last produced at the Comédie Française (1784). Their gospel was the *Contrat Social*. They eagerly accepted Rousseau's speculations, without criticism, as ascertained verities.

Verities or not, the need for a new creed and some political panacea was becoming daily more insistent. The Church was rapidly losing its hold on the upper class, though it remained deeply rooted in the affections of the lower. It was a rich body, of which the majority of the members, the ordinary parish priests, were very poor and faithful, and the minority were very rich, but hardly even pretended to be Christians. As to the Government, it was now in the hands of a Council of State, consisting of Ministers nominally appointed by the King, but actually the creatures of Court intrigue. Legislation was by royal edicts, which had to be registered by the *Parlements*, the great Courts of Justice, whose right of protest was of no practical use. These *Parlements*, as we have seen, were the supreme Courts of Appeal of the provinces. They had to deal with codes of law and customs which varied enormously in the different districts, and the mass of which was unwritten. The courts below the *Parlements* were utterly confused as to their jurisdiction. Half the trials that took place were to decide before which court a case should be heard. Procedure, especially in civil cases, was so incredibly slow that the case of *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* and all the delays of the old English Chancery Bar were rapid in comparison.

The old nobility of birth had nothing to do with the government of the State, except when one of them was appointed to the Council. They lived largely on pensions, and relied upon the King to pay their debts.

France, as a whole, was governed, as we have seen, by an hereditary official class. Every official post was

hereditary, except those of the Councillors of State and the Intendants. The latter, however, were always members of high official families, forming the distinct nobility—the *noblesse de robe*.

The Intendants were absolute in their districts, and were responsible to their Secretaries of State alone. Beneath them were a multitude of officials, most of them with no functions, and none of them with any initiative. The results were a terrible congestion of business and a great leakage of money, but a government that was mild rather than tyrannical. As to taxation, that could be increased indefinitely by mere administrative orders, unless a new tax was to be imposed. The most important of the direct taxes was the *taille*, a tax assessed on property, from which the nobility, clergy, and whole official class was exempt—practically all the well-to-do people in France. There was no exemption, theoretically, from the income-tax (*vingtième*) or graduated poll-tax, but in practice the nobility and high officials only paid a fraction of what was due from them. The deficiency had to be made up by the *taille*.

“Taxation,” says De Tocqueville, “fell not upon those who could best pay it, but upon those who could least escape it.” The indirect taxation was even more grievous. There were the custom duties (*aides*) levied not only upon foreign trade, but also upon goods moving from province to province. A boat from Languedoc to Paris would lose a fortnight in paying some forty tolls. There was the hated *gabelle*, the Government monopoly of salt, by which the peasants were compelled to buy as much as was thought good for them, and at an immense profit. And yet, owing to the variety of systems under which the tax was imposed, the price of salt varied enormously in the different districts; so that a premium was put upon smuggling, the country was kept in per-

petual ferment, and the galleys were crowded with convicted smugglers.

In spite of all these drawbacks, the people were better off than they had been at the beginning of the century. Even so, peasants and artisans alike were living on the verge of starvation. Local failure of the harvest immediately produced local riots, only to be pacified by Government relief. Failure of the harvest all over France must mean revolution.

Agriculture was still the occupation of three-quarters of the population. The Revolution in its first phase was, above all, an agrarian revolution, concerned with ameliorating the social condition of the 20,000,000 peasants, who had hitherto failed to make their voices heard. All other occupations—officials, industry, commerce, the liberal professions—only employed 6,000,000 inhabitants of France.

At the end of the fourteenth century had occurred that process of evolution by which the *vilain*, who was a *serf*, had been transformed into the *vilain* who could call himself a free man. And these had nearly all become proprietors in their own right. It was this immense number of small-holders who gave France her great wealth and strength and power of recuperation. And it was they who had to bear practically the whole burden of royal taxation, to pay dues to the lord, tithes to the Church, tolls on roads, rivers, and markets, and to render statute labour to the Crown.*

Whilst the clergy had absorbed the largest domains in France, one-third of the national territory, according to Arthur Young, had passed into the hands of these peasant proprietors. From their tiny farms they looked

* The royal *corvée*, for instance, was a toll of labour, by which the peasant was liable to be called off his farm to keep the roads in order.

with jealous eyes upon the huge sporting estates of the Grands Seigneurs, and the immense undeveloped domains of the clergy. The least sign of improvement in their own lands was a signal for a visit from the tax-collector ; and the nobles, as they drifted to Court, or, becoming poor, sold their lands, had always retained along with their châteaux a right of sovereignty over them, with the privilege of shooting and fishing, and exacting a variety of irritating and more or less profitable feudal dues. The peasant was compelled to use the wine-press, the mill, and the ovens of the seigneur ;* to pay tolls and percentages on his vintage and sales ; to pay for exemption from duties which had ceased to be practicable for centuries, or, if practicable, were no longer performed ; for the nobles who resided in their châteaux were impoverished, and the rich nobles who lived on pensions at Versailles, contributing to the enormous expense of the King's household and courting the valets of the Superintendents of Finance, entirely neglected their estates.

It was over a country so seething with discontent that Louis XVI. was called to reign. "What a burden !" cried the young King, when they told him that he had inherited the Crown. "And they have taught me nothing." If ever there was need upon the throne of a strong will and firm courage, guided by a large understanding, it was now ; but this well-meaning and scrupulous youth was ill-educated, of feeble will, and mediocre intelligence. He reformed the morals of his Court ; he tried to surround himself with a party of "honest men" ; he was eager for reform, eager to economize, in order that the poor might eat "bread at two *sous*." He was devoted to his Queen, Marie—the

* The seigneur probably did not obtain from the land half the rent paid to an English landlord ; but the seigniorial charges were exasperating in form, and doubly grievous, since so little was done in return for them.

light-hearted and pleasure-loving Marie Antoinette, whose grace and gaiety at first charmed everybody, and half-concealed her complete ignorance. Despising her husband, and surrounding herself with frivolous favourites, she soon became unpopular, and the subject of malicious gossip. Unfortunately, she did not confine her activities to the routine of pleasure at the Petit-Trianon, but, instigated by her mother, Maria Theresa, was continually interfering in politics on behalf of Austria. The famous story of the diamond necklace illustrates the nature of her reputation.

The Cardinal de Rohan, a handsome and dissipated courtier, had fallen from the favour of Marie Antoinette. He was eager to retrieve his position. Seduced by the promises of an unscrupulous lady of the Court, the Comtesse de La Motte, and that sublime charlatan, the "Comte de Cagliostro," he was led to act as an intermediary in obtaining for the Queen a diamond necklace, worth 1,600,000 *livres*, which had been made for Madame Du Barry, and left upon the jeweller's hands. The Queen, he was assured, wished to buy it secretly; by acting for her he would be sure to regain her good graces. In a twilight interview in the gardens of Versailles a woman, whom he thought to be Marie Antoinette, whispered to him that he might hope for forgiveness. He obtained the necklace, and received a forged acceptance of the bill in the name of Marie Antoinette. Madame de La Motte sold the necklace, and the Cardinal found himself unable to pay the bill. When the affair reached the ears of the King, he caused the Cardinal to be arrested as he was about to celebrate Mass, and to be sent to the Bastille. He then allowed him to stand his trial. The case caused incredible excitement. At length, after ten months, *Parlement* acquitted Rohan by three votes. The Comtesse de La Motte was branded and confined. It was

evident that the Cardinal was the dupe of a gang of rogues, and that the Queen was wholly innocent. But the verdict was hailed as a sentence against the Queen, who was known to have been eager for the Cardinal's condemnation. The vision of the clerical aristocrat buying the favours of a venal and frivolous Queen had been held before the eyes of France for a year, and so intense was the odium created against Court and Crown that Goethe has called this trial the "Preface of the Revolution."

This episode also brought into prominence the odious system of arbitrary imprisonment by the King's order—the *lettre de cachet*—without trial or cause assigned. The right was seldom put into force now, but *Parlement* vehemently opposed any such exercise of the King's personal jurisdiction. The eloquent descriptions of Mirabeau represented to the people's imagination the dungeons of the Bastille as the centre and symbol of tyranny; public opinion was shocked by the story of the unhappy prisoner discovered there by Malesherbes—a prisoner who had been left in those dungeons, forgotten, for sixty years, and who, when set free, finding himself without friends or relations, and knowing not where to turn, asked, as a sole favour, for leave to return home—to prison in the Bastille.

In foreign affairs, Louis was served by an exceedingly able and experienced Minister, Vergennes. He resented being dragged at the apron-strings of Austria, and, whilst wishing to avoid a rupture, hoped to maintain the balance of power, and to curb the ambitions of England and Austria, by alliances with the weaker Powers. Accordingly, when Joseph II. proposed to annex Bavaria and another slice of Turkey, and to give France part of the Netherlands for her support (1777), Vergennes refused; and when Austria moved against Bavaria in the

following year, Louis, in spite of the solicitations of Marie Antoinette, remained neutral. The intervention of Russia and France brought about the Peace of Teschen (May, 1779), and secured the balance of power in Europe. By that time France had entered upon the campaign of vengeance, foreshadowed by Choiseul. When the war between England and her American colonies had broken out (1775), French volunteers had rushed to the aid of the colonists ; but Vergennes waited to declare war until he had received assurances of her concurrence from Spain in virtue of the Family Compact. He waited for those assurances in vain. But French feeling became more and more warlike, and the success of the colonists at Saratoga, decided Vergennes. On February 6, 1778, he signed a treaty of alliance with the United States. Spain joined, and the young Marquis de La Fayette, returning from America, prepared an abortive invasion of England. France declared for the freedom of navigation of neutrals, as against the English claim to a right of search. But the Bourbons made little progress on the seas, whether in the Mediterranean or the West Indies. In the East, the capitulation of Pondicherry was followed by the expulsion of the French from Chandernagore, and their other settlements in India. Off the coast of Coromandel, however, the brilliant and gallant Suffren scored a series of naval successes (1781-1783). But an army despatched to America in May, 1780, under the Comte de Rochambeau, helped to bring the war to a conclusion. La Fayette and Washington surrounded Cornwallis. The capitulation of Yorktown led to the Peace of Versailles (September 3, 1783). Rodney's victory over the French fleet off Dominica (April, 1782) was too late to have much effect.

Suffren's victories and five years of war had only resulted in restoring Senegal and Goree to France, and the right of fortifying Dunkirk; she received Sta. Lucia and Tobago and



Aug. Rischgitz.

NAPOLÉON AT FONTAINEBLEAU, MARCH 31, 1814 *Page 383.*

After the picture by Delaroche at Buckingham Palace.

fishery rights in Newfoundland in exchange for Dominica and other West Indian islands. But Vergennes was content to have restored the prestige of his country in some measure; he cared little for Colonial enterprise, and was only anxious for peace, and to have his hands free to deal with the East. Joseph II. had come to an understanding with Catherine of Russia (1781) for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, and offered Egypt to France. Vergennes, refusing the temptation of conquest, induced Turkey to yield to Catherine (1784). Against the wishes of Marie Antoinette, he prevented an outbreak of war between Austria and Holland, patching up the Treaty of Fontainebleau (1785), and making a defensive alliance with Holland. He had checked the ambition of Austria; but the war with England had cost too dear. France was financially incapable of action, as was proved two years later, when, in the face of the English and Prussians, she could not make good her word to defend the "Patriots" of the United Provinces against foreign aggression. An alliance between England, Prussia, and Holland resulted. France dropped out of her place in the Councils of Europe.

The War of American Independence precipitated the French Revolution; for not only did the American Declaration of Rights inspire the French nobles who served in that war, and came home Republicans, but it also made the bankruptcy of the Government inevitable.*

Ever since 1715 the country had been more or less insolvent. Failure was now certain. The crash was precipitated by the commercial treaties made by Vergennes with England (1786), which had opened the French

* The French King had fought in America, for the principle that taxation without representation is robbery. If he was right in America, his Government was condemned a hundredfold in France. *Of. Lord Acton's Lectures on the French Revolution.*

markets to English manufacturers, and produced an industrial crisis ;* whilst a series of bad harvests (1787-1789), and the increasing price of bread, caused famine riots all over the country. The hunger of the poor deepened their murmurs against the rich.

Louis was eager to economize, eager for reform ; but one after another the able and honest enthusiasts whom he called in to reform the finances of the country fell before the resentment of the privileged classes, threatened by their reforms. Their monarch had not the strength of will and clearness of vision to save them. Turgot (Contrôleur-Général, 1774-1776), an enthusiastic humanitarian, a theorist, a forerunner of Adam Smith, who believed in freeing trade from all encumbrances, came in with a policy of retrenchment. There was to be no bankruptcy, no increase of taxation, no borrowing ; only the farmers-general must suffer, and *corvées*, duties, offices must be suppressed. The Vested Interests rose up against him—tax-gatherers, clergy, *Parlement*, fought for their threatened perquisites ; the Queen interfered on behalf of favourites whose privileges were to be “retrenched.” Only the King, the People, and the Thinkers supported him. He fell. To the man of theory and enthusiasm succeeded the man of practical expedient—Necker, a Protestant of Geneva, a philanthropist also, a prudent reformer, vigorous, and self-confident. Director-General of Finance under Maurepas, he raised great hopes by his careful tinkering. But tinkering and radical reform alike must be at the expense of the privileged. The old opposition was roused, the Court triumphed, and Necker’s dismissal filled the country with consternation (1781). There was a return to the old ways, offices and taxes were multiplied, and loans raised to pay for the American War. *Parlements* protested ; but the only way to avoid bank-

* Lavissee, ix. 1, 229,

ruptcy was to abolish privilege, and experience had proved to Calonne, the new Contrôleur-Général, that the *Parlements* themselves would not sacrifice their privileges. He proposed, therefore, to the King that he should summon an Assembly of Notables to pass a programme of pure Neckerism—the abolition of exemptions and the equal distribution of taxes. The Assembly met at Versailles. Calonne confessed to a deficit of 80,000,000 livres—it was, in truth, larger—and declared that in the abolition of abuses alone lay the salvation of the State ; but his proposal to abolish privileges seemed revolutionary to the Assembly of privileged Notables. The Queen denounced him as a madman. The King was persuaded to dismiss him ; but the issue of social inequality and fiscal abuses had now been placed before the nation. The new Contrôleur-Général, Brienne, could only adopt a similar programme of a *territorial subvention*. The Assembly of Notables declared against it and was dismissed (1787), but not before La Fayette had given voice to the growing demand for a National Assembly, that neglected institution, which had long been held before the country as the panacea of all ills. *Parlement* echoed that demand, refusing to register the decree for a *territorial subvention*, protesting against an increased stamp-duty, and declaring that the States General must be consulted before a new tax of unlimited duration could be imposed. Amidst great excitement, *Parlement* was banished to Troyes (August). Brienne, however, effected a reconciliation. *Parlement* returned, and the obnoxious edicts were withdrawn. Then genuine reformers ceased to hope any more from King or magistrates. They formed themselves into the Nationalist party. Riots were fostered all over the country. The deficit increased with the increasing disorder. The army was affected, the Ministry divided ; the King was despised, and the Queen hated.

The Notables had failed to solve the problem. Brienne was obliged to suspend payment. There was nothing for it but to summon the States General. Necker, who disliked this expedient, but hoped to limit the coming change to carrying equality of taxation through its agency, was appointed to direct the new order of things (August 25, 1788). Funds rose 30 per cent., and a great outburst of national rejoicing greeted the King's summons (August 8) to the National Assembly to meet on May 1, 1789, "to the end" as he proclaimed, "that the nation might settle its own government in perpetuity." In other words, representative government was to be substituted for the absolute monarchy of France.



Aug. Rischgitz

LOUIS XVI. (1774-1793).

From the picture by Duplessis at Versailles.

XXIII

THE REVOLUTION (A.D. 1789—1795)

EVERYTHING depended upon the composition of the States General. The archives were searched to discover the machinery of that obsolete institution. Necker consulted the Notables again. They resolved that the Commons should be elected, virtually, by universal suffrage, and that the parish clergy and lesser nobles should be represented like the greater. But they voted that each Order should be equal in number, so that the Third Estate would be in a hopeless minority. When this was known, there came from the Provinces a protest, like the first rush of wind which heralds the coming storm.

The National party, led by such men as Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, the Comte de Mirabeau, the Marquis de La Fayette, and the Abbé Sieyès, had organized itself to destroy privilege and to introduce a limited monarchy on the English model. They had inaugurated a system of political clubs, for, said Mirabeau, ten men acting together can make 100,000 tremble. The Press had recently been made practically free. In the *cafés* and the provinces a flood of political tracts, the eloquence of Mirabeau, and the brilliant brochures of Sieyès, had been preparing the people with the victorious formula of the Revolution. "What is the Third Estate?" Sieyès wrote. "Every-

thing. What is it in the political order? Nothing. What does it ask? To become something."

And now an explosion of pent-up feeling betrayed the success of the agitation. The Commons, it was clear, intended to have their way. Necker could but yield. With intense delight, the country learned that the Assembly was to consist of 300 deputies for the Clergy, 300 for the Nobles, and 600 for the Commons (January 24, 1797).

The Instructions (*Cahiers*) to their representatives, drawn up by the constituencies in accordance with ancient custom, show that there was a general desire throughout the country for moderate reform, and for the essential institutions of limited monarchy. They foreshadow the Charter of 1814. There was to be an end of the whole rotten system of ministerial despotism, corrupt officialdom, and fiscal inequality. The power of the King was to be limited, and a periodical, deliberative Assembly was to control taxation.

The people were not yet either anti-monarchical or anti-clerical. They only became so when King and Church identified themselves with abuses which had been found to be intolerable.

Amongst the Deputies themselves, the Clergy generally were opposed to the liberty of the Press, freedom of conscience, and the "Rights of Man," which the Noblesse, like the leaders of the Third Estate, impregnated with the ideas of the Philosophers, demanded. The two latter classes were hostile to the rich clergy and the monastic Orders; but there was no one general idea of reform. Monarchy according to Turgot (a King ruling over a level democracy) and monarchy according to Rousseau (democracy self-governing through a King) were long contending notions in the first Assembly. But one thing was certain, though not perceived by the King and his

Ministers : political reform was, as so often, to open the door to social revolution. The Commons did not intend to be content with mere equality of taxation, or to rest after the abolition of only the fiscal privileges of the aristocracy.

In order to make the numbers of the Third Estate tell, it was necessary that the three Orders should sit in a united Assembly ; but the majority of the nobles and priests insisted that they should sit separately. Necker, too, hoped to deprive the Third Estate of their power by this means. Then, he thought, if the Nobles and Clergy submitted to equal taxation of their own accord, any further demand for political power might be checked.

When, therefore, the States General met on May 5 at Versailles—at Versailles, because that suited the King's hunting arrangements—Necker encouraged the two Orders to surrender their right of exemption, and said nothing about a Constitution.

"It may be too late to-morrow," said Malouet to Necker, and urged him to give the people a Constitution at once, before the problem of fiscal inequality was merged in the greater debate of social equality. It *was* too late to-morrow. Instead of giving a lead to the inexperienced men who composed the Assembly, Louis and his Ministers left them to decide for themselves the momentous question, Was the more numerous Order to absorb the Nobles and Clergy ? Were the Commons to be free in presence of the owners of the soil, as they were free already in face of the submission of the absolute monarchy, as, encouraged by the teaching of England and America, they were determined to be free ? The answer involved, within the next seven weeks, the overthrow of the Monarchy itself. For when it became evident to the privileged classes that a free self-governing community was about to insist on the abolition of every

vestige of feudalism, they hurriedly closed their ranks and became a Conservative party. They refused to put themselves at the mercy of a hostile majority, or even to make the promised fiscal surrender, till they knew where the attack on privilege was to end. They claimed the support of the King, and ruined him as well as themselves.

The defection of some fifty nobles and one hundred clergy to the cause of the Commons rendered the victory of the latter certain. On June 10 Sieyès opened the attack. The Third Estate, he had proclaimed, was the nation. He now moved that, if the other Orders insisted upon acting separately, as their Instructions and the King had prescribed, the Third Estate should act without them, and declare themselves the National Assembly. This motion was carried on June 17. Two days later the majority of the priests—the inferior clergy, that is, as opposed to the prelates—joined them.

It was at this moment that Talleyrand begged a secret audience of the King, and proposed that Necker and the Assembly should be alike dismissed, and that the Crown should take the initiative in carrying out the constitutional changes upon which the nation insisted. It was almost the King's last chance of saving the Monarchy. The Comte d'Artois, who twenty-five years later, as Louis XVIII., was to receive the crown from the hands of Talleyrand, brought word to him that the King refused. The King refused because he had just taken the momentous resolution to grant to the people a large and liberal Constitution prepared by Necker. Such action would have superseded the Assembly. It came a few hours too late. The Assembly was suspended till the 22nd, and the hall in which they were then to meet to hear the Royal pronouncement was, meanwhile, closed to the Commons. Angry, suspicious, and ignorant of the proposed concessions, the Deputies adjourned to the

Tennis Court hard by, and bound themselves by oath never to separate until they had given a Constitution to France. The National Assembly had definitely committed itself to revolution. The King was frightened into an alliance with the nobility, who were powerless to save him, and whose interests were not his own. In his speech on June 23 he promised reform, but rescinded the recent Acts of the Assembly. He insisted that the three Orders must sit apart, and debate the constitutional question separately. All the rights of the privileged classes were to be maintained unless voluntarily abandoned.

Ignoring the King's order to depart, the Third Estate remained sitting, and debated the Royal speech. "The nation is assembled here and receives no orders!" exclaimed the President, Bailly, when that order was repeated. "What we were yesterday, we are to-day," said Sieyès. "Let us deliberate." So royalty was set aside with a superb simplicity. "The King," said Mirabeau, by far the most brilliant and far-seeing statesman of the Revolution, "has taken the road to the scaffold." The resolutions of June 17 were renewed. In face of this open defiance, the King must either yield or dissolve the Assembly. But dissolution meant bankruptcy, and, in an appeal to force, the army could not be trusted. Some faithful regiments of Swiss, Alsatians, and Walloons were summoned to the scene; meanwhile, to gain time, the King yielded, decreeing that the Nobles and Clergy, for the sake of peace, should sit with the Commons (June 27).

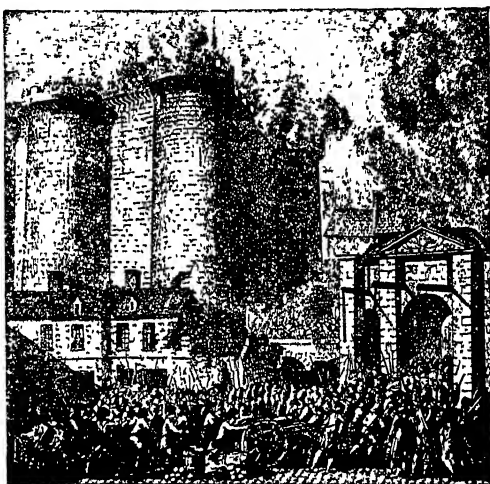
On July 8, Mirabeau rose to move an address to the King, warning him that, unless he withdrew the troops which were being massed to overawe Paris and the Assembly, the streets of the capital would run with blood. Louis refused, and banished Necker. Breteuil was ap-

pointed as a chief Minister, capable of leading the resistance with firmness. The answer of the people of Paris to this threat of reaction was given on July 14. The aristocracy was plotting and preparing to use force ; the popular party in Paris had been plotting, too.

The failure of the harvest had produced universal famine. There had been a series of bread-riots in Paris and all over France. Men, like Danton, had arisen who knew how to direct the social discontent of the masses. Through the Press and by their eloquence they guided the mob to the overthrow of the Monarchy. On the 12th, Camille Desmoulins, a clever journalist with a gift of incendiary rhetoric, harangued the people in the garden of the Palais Royal, and incited them to violence. The Bastille, the great disused prison which overshadowed the city, was the emblem of tyranny. To destroy it would be a sign of deliverance, a message plainly intelligible to Versailles. It represented, in the popular imagination, the exactions of the tax-collector, and the arbitrary rule of an absolute Monarchy, which could despatch thither, without trial and for ever, those who offended it. It was rumoured that great stores of grain and flour were stored there. Arms were seized at *Les Invalides*, and distributed. In a frenzy of rage, of hunger, and of triumph, the mob surged up to the grim walls of the mighty prison. The Bastille was stormed. Paris was in the hands of the insurgents. Roused in the night, Louis learnt the news from the lips of the Duke de Liancourt. "But this is a great revolt !" he exclaimed. "Nay, Sire," Liancourt replied ; "it is a great revolution." Guided by him, the King went down to the Assembly, donned the tricolour cockade, and made his submission. Necker was recalled. To maintain order, the National Guard, the citizen militia, was formed, and La Fayette, the Vice-President of the Assembly,

took oath to the people, as its Commander. For it was the people of Paris, not the King, nor the Assembly at Versailles, which was now the ruler of France, by virtue of an outbreak of pure anarchy, heralded by the murder of obnoxious officials in the capital.

The stronghold of absolutism had fallen in Paris ; at the news of the taking of the Bastille the flames of revolt went leaping skyward. In the country the cottage rose



THE TAKING OF THE BASTILLE.

against the castle ; the strongholds of feudalism were assailed and burnt, with all their records and title-deeds to the right of oppression.

The Constituent Assembly proceeded to register decrees which, for the most part, really only recorded the facts of an immense, triumphant Revolution. On August 4 the Nobles and Churchmen made the sacrifice of their privileges, merely reserving a claim to compensation for seigniorial dues which had originated, not in feudalism, but in

contract—compensation that was never paid. The right of holding office by purchase was abolished. Justice was declared gratuitous ; servitude at an end ; all employments were thrown open to all classes. The France of the new democracy was established.

As to the Church, the whole of its endowment was confiscated, and tithes were abolished. Henceforth all beneficed clergy were to be appointed and salaried by the State. The appropriation of the enormous wealth of the Church, amounting to a revenue of 230,000,000 livres, and an immediate issue of *assignats*—negotiable orders on the Church property ordered to be sold—saved the country from bankruptcy. But the provision that all priests must take the oath of fidelity to the new Constitution (June, 1790), which involved the renunciation of all Papal claims, was a blunder. It threw practically all the clergy and their followers into opposition ; it committed the Government of toleration and freedom to a career of persecution, and drove the devout King to his final act of folly, when he had at last been compelled to consent to the Civil Constitution. This Constitution, drawn up gradually between 1789 and 1791, amidst stormy debates and terrible incidents, was introduced by a Declaration of the Rights of Man, to balance the abolition of privilege and absolutism (August 26, 1789).

Based on the works of the Abbé Sieyès, the new Constitution consisted of a single chamber, absolute in legislation, and selected on a low but not universal suffrage. The King remained as a figurehead. The administrative scheme embodied the ideas of Rousseau. Extreme democratic decentralization was secured by entrusting all real power to municipal or village councils. The historic provinces were abolished, and eighty departments substituted. These were divided up into 44,000 communes—44,000 sovereign assemblies ! Such a nightmare of de-



Aug. Reichgitz.

MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE. *Pages 336 ff.*

Died 1834.

From the picture by Court at Versailles.

centralization was the prelude of an awakening to tyranny the most terrible in the history of Europe.

Meantime, the King pursued a policy of lamentable indecision. He came to Paris and delivered himself into the power of the Sansculottes, who had just learnt how to use it ; then he returned to Versailles and listened to the advice of reactionary courtiers. The Flanders regiment was summoned to Versailles to protect the Crown from the threatening forces in Paris. Exasperated by the summoning of these troops, which seemed to threaten civil war, and by the news of a royalist demonstration in the theatre on their arrival, a crowd of famishing men and women, rendered desperate by famine, marched out to Versailles, followed by La Fayette with the National Guard. They compelled the King, Queen, and Dauphin to return to Paris, "to make bread cheaper" (October 5, 6). Sansculottism had made a prisoner of its King. This was mainly a famine riot ; the pressure of hunger in Paris, owing to failing harvests, was now greater than ever it was during the siege of 1870. The crowd that marched to Versailles was largely composed of infuriated mothers of starving children ; but it was led by Stanislas Maillard, one of the conquerors of the Bastille, and manipulated by men like Marat and Danton, who intended to put pressure on the Crown and the Assembly in order that democratic Paris should have its way. For the Assembly soon followed the Royal Family ; but their reign, too, was already over. Authority had passed to La Fayette and his soldiers, and, beyond them, to the men who managed the masses.

The King might still have headed the Revolution and directed its course ; instead, his conduct was both treacherous and weak, a combination pleasing to neither Gods nor Cato. The populace was exasperated when it saw *émigré* nobles departing each day to join the King's nearest rela-

tives in their appeal for help to foreign Courts. The King began to be associated with a policy of retrogression and high treason to the nation ; the Revolution began to assume a patriotic as well as a social character.

Necker, helpless, had resigned in September, 1790. Mirabeau, who, since the abolition of privilege, had been working with and for the King, hoping, as always, to establish a constitutional monarchy upon the ruins of absolutism, died prematurely in April, 1791.

When the eyes of Mirabeau were closed, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and their comrades in the club of the Cordeliers, soon became more powerful than La Fayette, Bailly, and the frequenters of the *salon* of Madame de Staël. The power of the Press was on their side ; it was a new thing, and never was it more potent, never more violent, than when it was directed at this time by Desmoulins and by Marat. Mirabeau had advised the King to escape to Metz and raise civil war, which would end in the restoration of authority and a better system of constitutional laws ; but Marie Antoinette applied to her brother of Austria for 30,000 men, and, with the King, took the step which, if successful, meant an Austrian invasion as well as civil war. On June 20, 1791, they attempted to escape from France and to join the Comte d'Artois and the Prince de Condé in an appeal to Europe.

The flight of Louis opened the door for the Republic. He had left behind him a manifesto denouncing all that had been done since he suffered violence at Versailles. By act and word he recanted all that he had approved, published himself as a perjurer, avowed his hostility to the institutions he was called upon to administer, and proclaimed his approval of the foreign invasion which it would be his duty to the nation to resist ; for the feebleness and duplicity of the King had allowed the Queen to take his place, and her intrigues with Austria

convinced a resentful people that Marie Antoinette intended to rule through the intervention of foreign oppressors.

The King's flight was badly bungled. Arrested at Varennes, he was brought back to Paris. The Assembly first suspended him from his functions, and then, before dissolving itself, restored him under the new Constitution (September 30). Next day the new Legislative Chamber met. By a foolish self-denying ordinance, the Assembly had decreed that none of its members should be eligible to the new Chamber. It was therefore composed of utterly inexperienced men, whose main achievement was to plunge the country into war, and so to change the whole course of the Revolution.

Three parties are discernible in the new Assembly—the Feuillants, named after their club, and pledged to the ideal of a constitutional monarchy; the Republican Girondins, so-called from the department of the Gironde, whence they chiefly hailed; and the more violent Montagnards, or Extreme Left, led by Robespierre and the Jacobin Club, who gradually separated from Brissot and the Girondins.

Two extreme measures quickly brought these parties into the open. The *émigrés*, who on the frontier and at Brussels were promoting a foreign invasion, were summoned to return under pain of confiscation and then of death. The non-juring priests were deprived of their salaries.

The European Powers had hitherto been rather pleased than otherwise at the course of events in France. They agreed with Pitt, who, prophesying the exact opposite of the truth, foretold twenty years of peace for Europe as the result of the anarchy and bankruptcy of France. The French Princes had therefore received but a cold welcome hitherto, save at Stockholm and St. Petersburg.

For Gustavus III. saw whither events were leading, and Catherine II. of Russia was eager to embroil Europe, and to be left free herself to deal with Poland and Turkey. But after the suspension of the King, the Emperor Leopold II. of Austria and the King of Prussia issued the "Declaration of Pilnitz," proclaiming their intention to restore the monarchy in France. This was merely intended as a threat. But it was made the most of by the *émigré* nobles, who were organizing themselves on the Rhine, with intent to restore the old order of things, and it had the effect of confirming the belief of the French in the hostility of Austria, and of playing into the hands of the minority of the extremists in the Legislative Assembly, whose aim was war. The strength of the Girondin or Jacobin party was greater than their mere numbers, for they possessed the Jacobin Club. They wished for war for sentimental reasons, regarding it as their mission to regenerate Europe, and for practical reasons. For they intended to destroy the new Constitution, to abolish the Monarchy and central government, and to suppress the discontented clergy. But the country was settling down under the influence of good harvests and diminishing distress. War was the best cure for such premature content. Louis had vetoed a decree of expulsion against the non-juring ecclesiastics ; war would make his position impossible.

Obediently, on April 20, 1792, Louis declared war with Austria. Secretly he joined the Queen in her appeals to hasten the advance of the Austrian army. Under the famous General, the Duke of Brunswick, Austria and Prussia prepared for a parade march to Paris, welcoming an excuse for the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. But the French people, judging from a manifesto, prompted by Marie Antoinette and issued by the Allies, to the effect that the success of the *émigrés* would involve the

restoration of the old régime, took the invasion very seriously.

The manifesto, which threatened Paris and the Republicans with destruction, was intended to stay the hands of the regicides. But its effect was to identify the extreme Republicans with the nation and the army, and to mark their leaders, such as Danton, as the representatives of the French people. La Fayette, failing to uphold the Constitution, retired. Dumouriez succeeded to his command. A force of volunteers, who elected their own officers, replaced the royalist fine gentlemen who had emigrated. But if the Allies had advanced swiftly and boldly, they must have reached Paris. As it was, when, after the fall of Longwy and Verdun, the French for the first time made a stand at Valmy (September 20), the Allies halted, and presently fell back behind the frontier, leaving Louis to his fate. For that stand, though unimportant from a military point of view, had shown that, politically, the Republicans had triumphed. Austrians and Prussians distrusted each other, but the French people were rallying as one man to the defence of their land. The war was carried into the enemy's country. The Battle of Jemmapes (November 8) rendered Dumouriez master of the Low Countries. Then, by a decree of November 19, the Convention proffered sympathy and succour to every people that struck a blow for freedom. This decree was aimed particularly at England, in the hope of disabling her from interference by encouraging Irish rebellion. But the lust of conquest was not deemed inconsistent with the Rights of Man. The cloven hoof of annexation soon appeared. War was to be carried on, it was avowed, in order that the financial needs of France might be supplied at the expense of the peoples delivered by her arms.

War, as the Girondins had foreseen, rendered the King's

position impossible, since he was known to be hoping for the success of his country's invaders. The Girondin Ministry, composed of such men as Dumouriez, Servan, and Roland, had resigned when Louis refused to sanction a decree banishing the non-juring priests. It was time, declared Danton, to resort to terrorism.

On June 20 an angry crowd, organized by Girondins and Jacobins, invaded the Tuileries, in order to frighten the King into abandoning the priests and accepting his Ministers from the populace. Louis stiffened his back, faced the mob, and prepared to die in the cause of religion. He refused to recall the Girondins.

Contingents were summoned from the provinces, and trusty men marched from Toulon, Brest, and Marseilles, to Paris, singing the thrilling strains of Rouget de Lisle's revolutionary hymn, *La Marseillaise*. They came prepared to obey the orders of the Revolutionists when the final blow was to be dealt. Their arrival at the end of July coincided with the publication of Brunswick's manifesto. Panic had increased as the Allies advanced. The country was in danger, and the cause of the danger was the King and his foreign Allies. The King must be suspended or dethroned.

On August 9 the Jacobin leaders gave the word to their partisans in the sections of Paris to elect representatives who should take the place of the existing Municipal Council. Under the direction of this new Commune, composed of revolutionary town councillors who were the creatures of Danton, the insurgents advanced on the Tuileries (August 10). Louis could not rouse his guards to fight, and fled for protection to the Assembly. There he listened from the reporters' box whilst he was again suspended, and a National Convention was summoned—a single chamber to be elected by universal suffrage. The new Commune was recognized. Danton was master

of Paris. The Tuileries was sacked, and the Swiss guards and all the occupants slaughtered.

The government of Paris had passed into the hands of the extremists. Robespierre, Marat (who had already proposed that obnoxious Deputies should be tortured to death), Collot, Billaud, were all members of the new Town Council. The split between the Girondins and Jacobins had already begun. In political theory they were agreed, aiming at an ideally democratic republic, extremely decentralized ; but whilst the Girondins insisted on proceeding with this policy at once, the Jacobins perceived that the immediate necessity—if Paris was to be defended at all against the invaders, and reaction avoided—was a strong central Government. The soul of the Jacobins was Danton, a man neither fanatic nor fool—a strong man, who cared little for the ferocious doctrines of Marat, based on the *Contrat Social*, but only believed, being himself very much in debt, that the poor should be relieved at the expense of the rich. He saw clearly not only the immediate necessity of organizing a strong central Government, but also that it could be done through the agency of the thousands of political clubs scattered through France. The first step was achieved by the establishment of the new Commune. But the extremists were a small minority. Danton resorted at once to terrorism in order to secure a majority in the coming Convention. “France,” he said, “is not yet Republican ; we can only establish a Republic by intimidation.”

With Danton, and behind the violent declamations of Marat, worked Robespierre, methodical and relentless. The Commune claimed the King ; he was confined in the Temple, the ancient treasure-house of the Valois. The Press was censored, voters disfranchised, opponents flung into prison. When the news of the fall of Longwy

and Verdun came, there was an organized and methodical massacre of the priests and political prisoners with whom the gaols were crowded (September 2-5).

The Assembly and the Girondins were horrified, but helpless. The National Guard was in the hands of the Commune, and officered by Jacobins. Paris was cowed. The audacity of the minority produced the illusion of power. In such an atmosphere of blood and terror the elections were held. Even so, except in Paris, the majority of Deputies sent to the National Convention (September 20) were neither Girondins nor Jacobins ; but between these the struggle for supremacy lay, for the rest were terrified.

The Jacobins obtained the mastery by June, 1793. For whilst the Jacobins held Paris, the influence of the Girondins, who relied for support on the provinces, was ruined by the reaction which followed upon the execution of Louis (January 21, 1793). Danton and Robespierre had forced on his trial for that purpose. Danton had long hoped to effect a compromise with the Girondins. But they attacked Danton ; they attacked Robespierre ; they challenged the September massacres. Then on May 31 the insurrectionary masses invaded the Assembly, and on June 2 the arrest of some thirty Girondins on a charge of high treason was decreed. The Jacobins were now absolute in Paris ; but in the departments, at Lyons and Bordeaux, at Caen and Marseilles, there were risings of Girondins, and it was some time before the Jacobin conquest of France was complete. Before that time the dagger of Charlotte Corday had reached the heart of Marat as he lay in his bath (July 13), and the young assassin had paid with her life for the murder of the monster whom she regarded as responsible for the proscription of the Girondins. The Reign of Terror was begun, and by the end of October 180

Girondin Deputies had been imprisoned, dispersed, or guillotined.

The Reign of Terror lasted until July, 1794. It was conducted by the Jacobin club at Paris, acting through the Convention, in touch with the Jacobin clubs throughout the country, and backed by the National Guard. The whole machinery of government was worked by the Committee of Public Safety, a Jacobin Committee of the Convention, a kind of dictatorship of nine persons, endowed with almost absolute powers to carry on the war and prevent sedition. It worked to these ends with feverish energy. Robespierre and Carnot were the leading spirits. Emissaries were despatched to the provinces to collect supplies and superintend executions of the suspect. Revolutionary Tribunals were instituted all over France (April to October) to enforce unanimity of government by the justice of terror and the unvarying punishment of death.

Meanwhile, Cambon achieved the conversion of the Public Debt, and Cambacérès and a Committee of Legislation began that great Code of Civil Law which they were to complete under Napoleon. A new calendar—a marvel of absurd nomenclature—was introduced, in order to proclaim the substitution of Science for Christianity. The churches were closed, and a new worship of Reason was inaugurated by an actress, who, with the red cap of Liberty on her head, descended from the high-altar of Notre-Dame.

The execution of the King, and the declaration of the Convention (November 19) that they would help all nations struggling to recover their liberties, had thrown the whole of Europe into consternation. "The coalized Kings threaten us," cried Danton. "We hurl at their feet, as gage of battle, the head of a King." And, intoxicated by the success of Valmy and the Republican

arms in Italy and on the Rhine, the Committee declared war with England, Holland, and Spain (March and April), in addition to Prussia and Austria. The English navy swept the seas, and added to the acute distress occasioned by a failure of the harvest. The Western Provinces were in revolt (La Vendée), exasperated by the overthrow of the Church, the nobility, and the throne, and by the new conscription for the army. Dumouriez, failing in an unprovoked attack upon Holland, was defeated at Neerwinden, and went over to the enemy. Belgium was lost as easily as it had been won. Nothing could have saved Paris if the Prussians had chosen to exert themselves. Nothing, as it was, but the extraordinary energy of the Jacobin leaders could have saved France.

Apart from the Declaration of November 19, and indignation at the execution of Louis, the French unprovoked invasion of Holland sufficed to make English interference inevitable. At sea the English fleet alone was overwhelming; allied with Spain, Holland, Portugal, and Naples, and pitted against a navy which had lost nearly all its officers, its force was irresistible. The French ships were confined to port, the French West Indian Islands and Corsica annexed, and, though the gallant crew of the *Vengeur* went down shouting "Vive la République!" (June 1, 1794), the commerce which it was their province to protect was swept off the seas.

But on land the Coalition failed because Catherine of Russia seized the opportunity to move against Poland, thereby causing the Prussians to back out of the war, and to use the English subsidies against Russia. The Austrians could not make headway alone.

By his *levée en masse* (August, 1793), Carnot turned France into a nation of soldiers; by the end of the year Hoche, Moreau, and Masséna had come to the fore; Jourdan had rolled back the tide of foreign invasion by

his great victory over the Austrians at Fleurus (June 1) ; Holland and the Netherlands were occupied ; the insurgents of the West had been driven back ; and Bonaparte had recaptured Toulon.

Combined with the Terror, Carnot's able conduct of the war kept the Jacobins in power. Their government fell the moment the country was relieved from the danger on the frontier. Danton, supported by Desmoulins, had resigned when the Committee of Safety had entered upon its career of systematic murder. But he had done nothing to prevent the bloodshed. His retirement brought him to the guillotine. Robespierre secured his condemnation on April 5, 1794. A struggle for supremacy then began between Robespierre (supported by St. Just) and Couthon, and Billaud-Varennes and Collot. It soon became a matter of life and death who could strike first. The guillotine was so busy that it was almost as dangerous to sit still as to move. The unhappy Queen had paid for her royalty and her treason with her life (October 15, 1793) ; and now, whilst the heads of the suspect fell by hundreds, the Jacobin minority, which had begun to rule by terror, and could only continue to rule by terror, increased the pressure as they themselves grew more conscious of their weakness. They scrutinized the zeal of their own members, expelling and guillotining those who were guilty of hesitation. Themselves almost mad with fear, they justified their murders by the comforting doctrine of Robespierre, that it was necessary to wipe out the bad blood of those who were not fit to be citizens of the ideal Republic. When, in May, the National Convention was forced to submit its own members to the Revolutionary Tribunal upon the order of the Committee, they readily joined Billaud and Collot in the *coup d'État* of the "9th of Thermidor," which closed the Reign of Terror.

For such coercion was an act of tyranny unsurpassed by any in the history of the absolute monarchy, a measure so desperate that it must produce the crisis it strove to avert. On June 8, Robespierre, absolute tyrant of France, had walked at the head of the Convention to the Champ de Mars to re-establish national religion in the shape of a Feast of the Supreme Being. Seven weeks later he was arrested on a charge of meditating a dictatorship, and his head rolled into the basket of the guillotine amidst the cheers and execrations of the mob (July 28, 1794).

The fall of Robespierre gave the signal for a violent reaction. The whole country rose and swept away every trace of the Jacobin clubs and organization; only the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris was retained, to condemn and execute the Jacobin leaders.

A year of negotiation, during which Louis XVII. died in prison, issued in peace with Spain and Prussia (Bâle, April and July, 1795). Negotiations with Austria and England, however, broke down, because France insisted upon the cession of the Austrian Netherlands. The Convention was able, however, to boast of a brilliant success by Hoche, who destroyed a band of *émigrés* whom the English were endeavouring to land in Quiberon Bay, in order to revive the dying flames of the insurrection in the western provinces known as La Verdée (July 21, 1795).

The moment had now come when the National Convention was to propound the new Constitution they had prepared, and to declare their own task completed. The Directory Constitution, compared with that of 1791, was a great step towards centralization. The local councils, indeed, were left less independent than they had been under the King. Experience had proved the absolute necessity of a bicameral system, unless the object was to relapse into barbarism and tyranny. Legislative power was therefore placed in the hands of two

Chambers : with a Chamber of 500 lay the initiative, but the consent of a Chamber of 250 Ancients was necessary for any law. The Chambers were to be perennial, but one-third of their members were to retire annually. All executive functions were vested in five Directors, equal and absolute, chosen by the Chambers, one of whom was to retire each year. In the first election two-thirds of the Deputies were to be chosen from the existing Convention. This provision was in itself enough to wreck the Constitution of the Year III.

For it secured a majority of Jacobins to the Executive for five years. The Jacobins were feared and hated, and, with the exception of Carnot, who was necessary at the War Office, scarce one would have been re-elected had the elections been free. Forty thousand conservative and royalist *bourgeois*, alarmed and indignant at the prospect of power being perpetuated in the hands of the existing Deputies, rose and marched on the Tuileries (October 5, 13 Vendémiaire). The army of the Convention was small ; but a young officer, who was to prove the most brilliant figure on the battle-fields of Europe—Murat—had brought up cannon from the country ; and a protégé of Barras, the Director in command, had been entrusted with the defence. This was that youthful artillery officer, Bonaparte, steeped in the philosophy of Rousseau and the study of military history, an epileptic Corsican, who had almost been born an English subject, and who had won distinction in the siege of Toulon. Under his direction every approach to the Louvre and Tuileries was commanded by batteries. After half an hour's fighting in the Rue St. Honoré, the mob broke, dominated by a master whose genius was to render the Revolution triumphant on the Continent. Similar risings in the provincial towns were suppressed in a similar way. From the first, therefore, the Directory rested on the army, and the

army alone. The Revolution had begun by an attack upon authority, by weakening the Executive and decentralizing power. It was continued in the hour of national peril by the Jacobins, who governed on the principle that power, coming from the people, ought to be concentrated in the fewest possible hands, and rendered absolutely irresistible and irresponsible. The Constitution of the Year III. closed the period of Revolution, but at the same time it began the process which led to the Consulate, when the army, upon which the Government was dependent, should choose its own man.

The artificial majority of the Directors disappeared in two years, as the electors regained their freedom. In the face of a hostile majority, who refused supplies, the Directors must either resign or resort to force. They resorted to force.

Meantime, the country, dazed and bleeding, after experiences so terrible, turned to drown the memory of its Terror in amusements of any kind. There was a notable deterioration of morals. Business was at a standstill, the roads were in ruins and infested by brigands, but a mania for luxury and speculation prevailed. In the theatre scenes of blood and thunder held the boards, and though Paris gave itself up to a round of concerts and balls, there was in its gaiety something of the macabrous humour of the Dance of Death.

Stunned by novelties and horrors, the people remained inert and apathetic. Only the Royalists began to raise their heads and to see in the misgovernment of the Directory hope for the return of Legitimate Monarchy.

XXIV

THE CONSULATE AND EMPIRE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

A.D. 1796—1815

THE force which the Directors needed was again supplied by Bonaparte. A large part of Europe was still arrayed against the French Republic. In the autumn of 1795 a disastrous campaign against the Austrians on the Rhine had not been balanced by the victory of Schérer in Italy (Loano, Nov. 23, 24). But in 1796 Carnot decided to take the offensive with the magnificent armies he had created, and planned a triple advance upon Vienna. Hoche was to defend the coast of Brittany, Jourdan to advance by the Valley of the Main, Moreau by the Valley of the Neckar, and Bonaparte to move through Piedmont, which was allied to Austria. Bonaparte alone succeeded. Whilst Hoche, having pacified La Vendée, failed in an attempt to land in Ireland; whilst the English beat the combined French and Spanish fleets off Cape St. Vincent (Feb. 14, 1797); whilst the Archduke Charles held Moreau and Jourdan in check, Bonaparte, by a series of brilliant victories with an inferior force, made himself master of Northern Italy (April 12 to Jan., 1797). His extraordinary energy and resourcefulness, and the wonderful enthusiasm and devotion with which, now and always, he inspired his men, enabled him, after the most daring campaign of modern times, to drive the Austrians back into Tyrol.

Within a twelvemonth he had conquered Piedmont and reduced the King of Sardinia to an ignominious peace, recaptured Corsica from the British, subdued Lombardy and Mantua, detached the King of Naples, as well as Parma and Tuscany, from the Coalition, laid Venice and Genoa* under tribute, and mulcted the Holy See of a year's revenue and a third of its dominions (Tolentino, February, 1797). And he had not only supported and enriched his army with the spoils of Italy, but had sent thirty million francs home to the Directors, who were crippled by reckless issues of *assignats*.

After the victories of Arcola (Nov.) and Rivoli (Jan. 14-16), and the fall of Mantua (Jan. 2), Bonaparte, with incredible temerity, pressed forward towards Vienna, and forced the Austrians to sign the preliminaries of peace at Léoben (April 18), without consulting the Directors. That was a military operation, he afterwards said. He did not know that at that very moment the armies of the Rhine, now under Hoche and Moreau, were beginning a victorious advance, and he was justly afraid of having his communications cut, and of being isolated, if he advanced farther. These preliminaries, still with scant attention to the Directors, he converted into the Treaty of Campo Formio (Oct. 17, 1797). Austria ceded the Austrian Netherlands, recognized the Cisalpine Republic (composed of Austrian Lombardy, Modena, and the Legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and the Romagna), and the French claims to the left bank of the Rhine. But the most significant part of the treaty is that Austria was allowed to seize Venice and Dalmatia in return for her recognition of the claim of France to the Ionian Islands. In order to gain the "key to the East," Bonaparte sacrificed

* Genoa and the adjacent territory was soon afterwards converted into the *Ligurian Republic* (June, 1797).

Venice, which once "had held the glorious East in fee." Already the ambitious dream of conquering an eastern empire had taken possession of his ardent imagination, a dream doubly enticing, since its accomplishment would involve the destruction of the trade and empire of the only enemy of France which remained uncrushed—Great Britain.

Meantime the Directors had made their *coup d'état* (Sept. 4, 1797 = 18 Fructidor, Ann. V.). The other armies gave no sign in their favour, but Augereau, the representative of Napoleon and his army, moved on the Tuileries. The Deputies were arrested, and half a hundred innocent legislators were brutally handled and transported. The two moderate Directors, Carnot and Barthélemy, were also exiled. Henceforward the three Directors, Barras, Rewbell, and La Réveillère-Lepeaux, ruled by the "Law of the Sword." And the sword was Bonaparte's. He returned, after Campo Formio, to receive the frantic applause of the populace. Rejecting the proposal of the Directors that he should command a projected invasion of England, he obtained their sanction for an expedition to Egypt, which would not only be a menace to British commerce, but also a step towards the realization of his dreams of Eastern conquest, and a continuation of French policy from the days of the Duc de Choiseul, and even of the Crusades themselves. The Directors were only too glad to be rid of so capable and ambitious a soldier. War was the breath of life to them. Only by successful war could they hope to pay the troops, and to prevent the army from sharing the disgust of the country for their rule. Negotiations for peace, which had been begun with England and Portugal, were therefore broken off. Armies were sent to revolutionize and plunder Switzerland and Italy. The Roman and the Helvetic Republics were proclaimed, the Pope de-

throned, and enough money was extracted from the Swiss to enable the bankrupt Government to finance the Egyptian expedition. On May 19, 1798, Bonaparte sailed from Toulon "to take possession of Egypt and Malta, and to chase the English from all their possessions in the East."

English command of the sea made the expedition hopeless from the first, but it was thought, apparently, that the threat of invasion and of an Irish rebellion would pin the English fleet to the Channel. But at the Battle of the Nile Nelson destroyed the French fleet under Brueys (Aug. 1, 1798), and, with England mistress of the sea, the French troops were locked up in Egypt, never to get out save as prisoners of war. That issue was decided by Nelson's fleet and Abercrombie's forces at Alexandria (March, 1801).

Egypt, however, served Bonaparte's turn. After failing to take St. Jean d'Acre, he inflicted a crushing blow upon the Turkish forces at Aboukir (July, 1799). But his troops were now exhausted, and he was badly supplied with money and stores. At this moment he learned that things were going badly with the Directory and its armies in Europe. He at once abandoned his ill-equipped forces, and, falsely proclaiming that the conquest of Egypt was assured, slipped across to Fréjus (Oct. 9). There he landed in the nick of time, in a blaze of military and melodramatic glory, appearing as the French conqueror of the East and the saviour of his country from the hideous menace of another Jacobin régime, from chronic terror and from disastrous war. He was without a rival. Hoche was dead, Carnot gone, Joubert slain.

The Directors had been only too successful in their policy of stirring up war. They had intended to force Austria into hostilities whilst keeping Prussia neutral ;

they were soon face to face with the Second Coalition, organized by Pitt, and including England, Austria, Russia, and Turkey.

The campaigns of 1799 began with some partial successes in Naples, but in March Jourdan was defeated by the Archduke Charles at Stockach ; in April Schérer and Moreau were defeated and driven out of Piedmont ; in June Macdonald was beaten by Suvóroff, the great Russian General, on the Trebbia ; and in August Joubert was defeated and killed at Novi. All Italy was lost.

Lack of co-operation alone prevented the Allies from invading the Republic and bringing her to her knees. The French armies were badly equipped, for the Directory had no money ; their best troops were locked up in Egypt ; and France, deprived of her political liberty, was in a state of passive rebellion. But the stupidity of the Austrians, who hampered Suvóroff in every way, saved France. After the crushing victory of Masséna over the Russians at Zürich (Sept. 25), and the failure of an Anglo-Russian descent upon Holland, Paul I. backed out of so unsatisfactory an alliance.

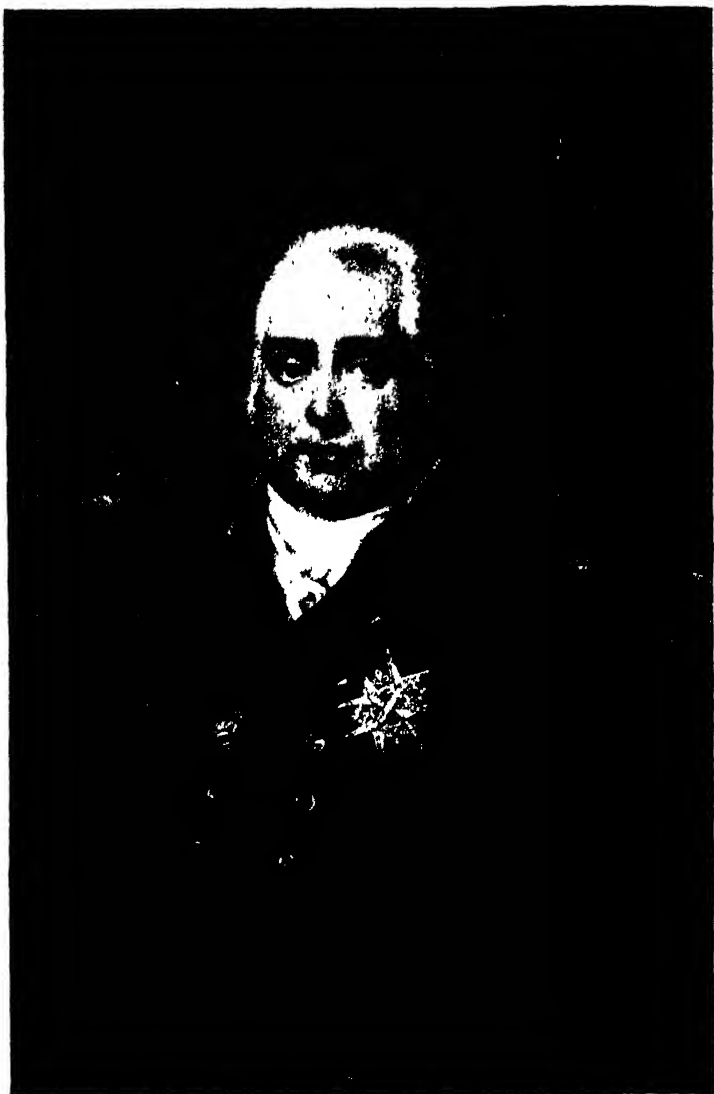
The Directors, who had been obliged to declare a partial bankruptcy in 1797, had proved themselves corrupt, insolvent, violent, and ineffective. They had succeeded neither in making a brilliant peace nor in waging a successful war. Their time was now come. By manipulating the elections they had kept in power so long, but the choice of Sieyès, who had never approved of the Directory Constitution, to take the place of Rewbell as Director (May 11, 1799) pointed to the beginning of the end.

Bonaparte was hailed by all parties as the one man with the clear vision and strong will who would reconcile liberty with order, and allow the Revolution to be delivered of its full message of revised laws, financial reform, and political equality. "What," he asked of

the Directory, "have you done with this France which I left so brilliant? I left you peace; I find war. I left you victories; I find defeats. I left you the millions of Italy; I find laws of spoliation and misery." The antithesis was too true, the criticism too deadly. A speech to the Ancients and a show of force from his grenadiers, caused the Council of Five Hundred to be dissolved (Nov. 9 = 18 Brumaire).

Under a new Constitution, adapted by Bonaparte himself from a scheme drawn up by that experienced constitution-monger, the Abbé Sieyès, he took the title of First Consul for ten years, with two colleagues, Cambacérès and Lebrun, who had merely a consultative voice in affairs. There was a Senate, Tribunate, Legislative Chamber, and Council of State, all practically composed of nominees of the First Consul, and an official hierarchy appointed and dismissed at his pleasure. All real authority and legislative initiative rested with the Government, and the Government was Bonaparte. The electors were left with mere formalities to perform. Crude democracy, Sieyès had declared, is an absurdity. The highly complicated machinery of the "Constitution of the Year VIII.," under a specious appearance of constitutional democracy, cleverly disguised an undivided despotism. Submitted to the plebiscite of the nation, it received an overwhelming approval.

Peace, in order to the restoration of national order and prosperity, was now the first necessity; peace not only abroad, but with the people, clergy, nobles, royalists, and financiers at home. Bonaparte therefore made overtures to England and Austria on the basis of the *status quo*. But they distrusted him; they thought France was more exhausted than she really was, and Austria hoped to recover the Netherlands and Lombardy. A very brilliant campaign settled the question. Bona-



Aug. Reichgütz.

LOUIS XVIII. (1814-1824).

From a mezzotint by C. Turner, from the painting by Huet Velliers.

parte led the Austrians to expect that he would advance from the Rhine, where Moreau was manœuvring cleverly with a veteran army, and then suddenly crossed the Alps by the narrow and dangerous pass of the Great St. Bernard (May 15-20), and burst like a thunder-cloud upon the plains of Lombardy. Thanks to the heroism of Desaix and his opportune arrival with reinforcements, defeat at Marengo was converted into a crushing victory (June 14, 1800). Then, as Austria would not sign a peace without England, this was followed up by a smashing blow from Moreau at Hohenlinden (Dec. 2). By the Treaty of Lunéville (Feb. 9, 1801) Austria was obliged to cede to France the boundaries for which she had fought so long; Belgium and Luxemburg were to be hers in addition to the German territory on the left bank of the Rhine. Meanwhile brilliant successes by Brune, Macdonald, and Murat had brought Italy once more under French control. France occupied Piedmont; the King of Naples was compelled to maintain a French garrison at Taranto; the Cisalpine, Batavian, Helvetian, and Ligurian Republics were recognized as constituted by France, but Austria stipulated for their independence. Rome and Tuscany, now converted into the kingdom of Etruria, were at the mercy of Bonaparte (Treaty of Florence, March, 1801), and compelled to close their ports to the English. Spain ceded Louisiana to France, and undertook to compel Portugal to recede from her alliance with England. By closing to her merchants every port which he could control Bonaparte hoped to force the English to make peace, for England alone, supported by Portugal, still remained in arms. But with the aid of the League of Armed Neutrality, formed by Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia, to protect the rights of neutrals at sea against the pretensions of England, Bonaparte hoped to deal with the English fleet. He had

begun to assemble in the camp at Boulogne a force for the invasion of England, and was planning to strike at her through Egypt and the East, when Nelson's victory over the Danes at Copenhagen, and the death of Paul I., dissolved the League of Neutrals, and destroyed Napoleon's dream of blockading the coast of England, and driving the English from the Mediterranean. The accession of Alexander I. led to an understanding between England and Russia, and also introduced on to the European stage a youthful Czar, jealous of the "Corsican upstart," and eager to replace the supremacy of France by the supremacy of Russia. In spite of these advantages and of her success in Egypt, England consented to make peace. It was a peace of exhaustion. The whole world was weary of war. By the Treaty of Amiens (May, 1802), England undertook to restore to France and her allies, Spain and Holland, all her maritime conquests, except Ceylon and Trinidad, to recognize the Treaty of Lunéville, and to evacuate Malta within three months. France was to evacuate Naples. Egypt was restored to Turkey, and the independence of the Ionian Islands was guaranteed.

On the conclusion of this treaty Napoleon, as he now began to be called, forced the Assemblies to name him Consul for life. With Josephine at the Tuileries he inaugurated a Court, and the Republican titles of *Citoyen* and *Citoyenne* gave place to the old politenesses. The longed-for universal peace appeared to have been established. Mistress of Holland, Belgium, the left bank of the Rhine, of Switzerland and Italy, never had France been more powerful. Simultaneous treaties with Russia, Turkey, Bavaria, and Prussia had been hailed with fervent joy. At home the Jacobins had been proscribed, and the rising of Royalist *Chouans* in the West had been sternly repressed. True, the Press and the Theatre were severely

censored, and there was still a strong opposition of Royalists and Republicans, especially in the army, to the personal rule of "Sultan Bonaparte." But Napoleon, attaching himself neither to the Red Heels nor the Red Caps, was working to that end with marvellous versatility and resource by forming a party of his own. A national plebiscite demonstrated that, in gratitude for the restoration of peace and order, an overwhelming majority of his countrymen approved of the new Cæsarism in the person of the Sole Consul. Two years later, by a flagrant breach of international law and domestic justice, Napoleon caused the Duc d'Enghien, son of the Duc de Bourbon, to be arrested at Ettenheim, in Baden territory, and shot for his alleged share in a Royalist plot, in which Moreau was implicated (May, 1804). Napoleon availed himself of the excitement caused by this incident to get himself declared Emperor, and his throne hereditary.

During these years (1799-1804) of feverish activity and elaborate intrigue at home and abroad Bonaparte created contemporary France. Whilst confirming the work of the Revolution, which had made all equal before the Law, he restored the centralized absolutism of the old Monarchy. Order and regularity were introduced into every branch of the Administration.

The Council of State, appointed by the First Consul, and responsible to him alone, comprised the heads of all the great departments, and was also a quasi-legislative and judicial body. Under the direction of Bonaparte, and in obedience to the driving power of his immense genius for work, organization, and initiative, it was responsible for the great and lasting achievements which render his fame as a statesman immortal.

Local government through the communal districts (*arrondissements*) was organized (Feb., 1800), and forms the basis of the present system. The worthless *assig-*

nats of the Revolution and Directory were repudiated, the finances restored, and the Bank of France established. Within a decade, thanks to the enormous energy of Bonaparte, the *Code Napoléon* was completed, a Code which was admirably suited to the French people, and which forms the framework of modern French society. It involved the unification of the innumerable existing codes of law, and, by an immense simplification of law and procedure, rendered justice comparatively rapid and cheap. The medieval criminal law was modified; weights, measures, and coinage were unified, and the decimal and metric systems introduced. Not without reason did Napoleon at St. Helena claim that this work, which in its faults and merits alike bears the imprint of his genius in every line, and became a model for other nations, constitutes his title to the benediction of posterity.

After the civic oaths exacted from the Clergy had been commuted to a simple declaration of fidelity to the Constitution, complete reconciliation with the Church was effected by a *concordat* with the Pope. On Easter Sunday, 1802, the *Te Deum*, sung in Notre-Dame, and attended by the Consular Court with all the pomp of ancient monarchy, proclaimed the reconciliation of France and Catholicism. Similarly, steps were taken to pacify the *ci-devant* nobility. With a few exceptions, pardon was offered to the 150,000 proscribed *émigrés* who still remained abroad, on condition of their returning by Sept., 1802, and taking the oath of fidelity to the Constitution.

The repair and development of the roads, canals, and ports were pressed forward. Ere long a system of National Schools was introduced. Under the guidance of Napoleon, indeed, France emerged from a state of anarchy and insolvency into the best system of govern-

ment that had been known upon the Continent since the days of the Roman Empire. Such and so great was the gift of this amazing soldier to his country. But the immense labour of these salutary measures could only absorb a small part of his boundless and restless vigour.

Vast schemes of universal empire seethed in his teeming brain; immense visions of territorial and colonial aggrandizement combined with the vague desire to spread the democratic principles of France beyond her boundaries, and with the very definite personal ambition, born of an insane and unscrupulous egotism, to raise the name of the "Corsican upstart" upon a pinnacle of political glory to be erected by the arms of France. Dependent at first upon the army, as the Directors had been, the success of his domestic government had made him hugely popular. By 1803 he was independent of the army, and had no need of war. This was the moment he chose to enter upon a career of international brigandage and crime, and to force on a war with England, which was only to end, after the waste of millions of lives, with the catastrophe of Waterloo.

"Between the old monarchies and a young Republic," he declared, "the spirit of hostility must always exist. Every treaty of peace means to me no more than a brief armistice." And if France was to lose her political liberty and the best blood of her sons in the career of military aggrandizement upon which she now embarked, her victorious armies did at least spread throughout Europe the ideas which had destroyed medieval feudalism within her own borders, and contributed to the formation of modern Italy, Germany, and Holland.

No sooner had the Treaty of Amiens been signed than Napoleon began to build a fleet, with which to challenge the supremacy of Great Britain upon the seas. He prepared to annex Spain and Portugal, in order to add their

fleets to those of Holland and Italy, and to close all ports to English goods. Great colonial expeditions were fitted out for the Antilles, Mauritius, Louisiana, Madagascar, and India; and a series of aggressive measures, very like those of the Directory in 1798, and, like them, bound to provoke war, was undertaken, intended to strengthen the position of France upon her frontiers.

In the autumn of 1802 Napoleon suddenly demanded that the English Government should expel all French subjects residing in that country without his leave. Upon their refusal, he definitely annexed Piedmont and Elba, refused to evacuate Flushing and Utrecht, and marched 30,000 troops under Marshal Ney into Switzerland. Posing as "Mediator" there, he forced a new federation upon the Helvetian Republic, and converted her into a mere satellite of France (Feb., 1803). He imposed a new centralized Constitution upon Lombardy, and got himself elected President of the Cisalpine Republic. He made similar moves in the direction of the Ligurian and Batavian Republics and of the German principalities.

The *Moniteur*, his official organ, announced that France intended to annex Egypt. It was evident that there was to be no limit to the restless ambition and aggressiveness of the Sole Consul. The independence of Holland and Switzerland were vital to England. The Treaty of Amiens had become intensely unpopular there as soon as it was known that Bonaparte had flatly refused to make any mercantile agreement or to remove his embargo on British merchandise. England saw her maritime supremacy and her colonial empire threatened, and that the Treaty of Lunéville had been broken by Bonaparte's aggression. She now refused to keep the Treaty of Amiens by restoring Malta unless the conditions of 1802 were re-established. Napoleon made a scene with the

English Ambassador, and cried for "Malta, or war." England gave him war on May 18, 1803. Napoleon replied by seizing all English travellers in France and detaining them as hostages. A few days later a French army corps invaded Hanover. Threats to invade England were accompanied by great naval preparations and the concentration of a huge army at Boulogne. Spain, the reluctant ally of France, declared war against England in December, 1804. Napoleon exchanged the title of President of the Cisalpine Republic for that of King of Italy, annexed Liguria, and placed upon his head the Iron Crown of the Lombards in May, 1805. Meantime Pitt, after prolonged endeavours, induced Austria and Russia, Sweden and Naples to form the Third Coalition. Unfortunately for the Coalition and herself, Prussia refused to join (April, 1805).

The French army, trained in the camp at Boulogne, was magnificently ready for war. Given three days of east wind, said Napoleon, he was ready to invade England. He probably regarded the threatened invasion merely as the second string he always liked to have to his bow, and meantime it acted as a bait and a blind to the Austrians. The eastern frontier of France was bare of troops.

Instead of waiting for their Russian allies, the Austrians advanced. Then the French army in Hanover and the Grand Army of Boulogne were marched with amazing rapidity on converging lines upon the Danube. Completely outmanœuvred, the Austrian army was forced to lay down its arms at Ulm (Oct. 20), and Napoleon entered Vienna. His position, however, was dangerous. Kutusoff, with 100,000 Russians and Austrians, was in Moravia. The Czar was in Berlin, urging the King of Prussia to avenge the insult of the French, who had marched through his territory without leave on the way to Ulm. Frederick

William II. was roused to despatch an ultimatum. Napoleon, now in touch with the Russian army in Moravia, referred it to Talleyrand at Vienna. But before it was answered the Czar foolishly insisted upon advancing. The brilliant sun of Austerlitz shone upon Napoleon's supreme achievement in generalship (Dec. 2). Kutusoff's army was annihilated, the Prussian envoy pocketed his ultimatum, and Napoleon was master of Central Europe.

Russia refused, indeed, to make peace, but Austria (Treaty of Presburg, Dec. 26, 1805) was compelled to pay an indemnity and to cede Venetia and Dalmatia to the Kingdom of Italy. The Tyrol and Austrian Suabia were divided between the Dukes of Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden. Thus the influence of France was extended over those German States, and at the same time Prussia, which Napoleon wished to embroil with England, was compelled to accept, as the reward of her admiration for the victor, Hanover in exchange for Cleves, Wesel, and Neuchâtel. This was a first step towards the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine, which was completed by the following August, and by which all South Germany became, for purposes of war and foreign policy, part of the Empire of Napoleon. Francis II. resigning the Imperial dignity, the Holy Roman Empire came at length to an end.

It was now part of Napoleon's policy to strengthen his dynasty by providing crowns and principalities for his brothers and favourite Generals, as he created a new nobility and rewarded his army with decorations and doles. He deposed the Neapolitan Bourbons, and declared Joseph Bonaparte King of Naples, and Louis Bonaparte King of Holland.

The English Lion alone remained in his path. Between England and the military and commercial aggression of Napoleon there could be no compromise. Two days after

Ulm Nelson destroyed the united French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar (Oct. 21). Ulm and Austerlitz for the moment obscured the significance of that disaster ; but Trafalgar was the really decisive battle of the Napoleonic era. It enabled England to continue her efforts unceasingly to oppose the conqueror on the Continent, and in Pitt's famous phrase, after having "saved herself by her exertions," to "save Europe by her example."

Napoleon could no longer strike at England directly. It only remained for him to attempt to regain the dominion of the sea by his conquests on land, to subdue all Europe in order to treat England as a fortress, and to starve her out by a blockade.

First he used some insincere negotiations for peace, which he opened with Fox's Ministry, to force a war with Prussia ; for during those negotiations, which he broke off because England was pledged to maintain the King of Naples in Sicily, and Napoleon wished to be master of the Mediterranean, as of everything else, he offered to take Hanover away again from Prussia, and to hand it back to England. The Prussians were furiously indignant at such contemptuous treatment, and, thinking that the French were still the "men of Rossbach," and Napoleon would not be ready, they declared war (Sept., 1806). Within a month, after the twin battles of Jena and Auerstädt, their armies were practically annihilated, and Napoleon was in Berlin issuing the decrees of Berlin (Nov. 21). All the smaller German States were compelled to join the Federation of the Rhine ; and now master of the German coast, Napoleon, by the decrees of Berlin and Milan, announced the Continental Blockade, by which he hoped to bring Great Britain to her knees, and was very nearly successful.

Every country which wished to remain in friendly relations with France was commanded to abandon all

commerce with Great Britain, to confiscate all British property, and to imprison all British subjects. Whether the blockade could be enforced depended upon the coming campaign with the Russians. Napoleon left Berlin for Posen and Warsaw, and conducted a midwinter campaign, which ended with a hard-fought battle in a snow-storm at Eylau (Feb. 8, 1807). It was a technical victory for the French, but the stubborn Russian infantry gave Napoleon his first check in a pitched battle. He was obliged to return to his winter-quarters on the Vistula, and to await the arrival of fresh troops. A third levy of men and boys was called for within twelve months. Thus reinforced, Napoleon reopened the campaign in the spring. Manœuvring the Russians into a trap at Friedland (June 14, 1807), he scored the decisive victory which brought Prussia and the Czar to terms (Treaty of Tilsit, July 8).

Prussia was deprived of all her territory west of the Elbe and of Prussian Poland, and was bound to maintain a huge French garrison till she paid an indemnity obviously beyond her means. Both Russia and Prussia recognized Napoleon's arrangement of the map, and accepted the "Continental system." A new kingdom of Westphalia was erected, comprising Brunswick, Hesse-Cassel, and part of Hanover, with Jerome Bonaparte for King. At the same time a secret understanding was arrived at between Alexander and Napoleon, which gave the latter a free hand to enforce the blockade throughout Europe, whilst the Czar was granted liberty to seize Finland and the Danubian provinces of Turkey. Political and international morality had long ceased to count in the scheme of Napoleon's monarchical ambition. But there were spots in the sun of his dazzling triumph. Prussia, crushed and humiliated, was bitterly resentful; the acceptance of the blockade by Russia was suicidal,

for to close the Baltic to English trade was to ruin St. Petersburg ; the ports of Sweden and Portugal were still open to British trade. What of Denmark ? Judging by what he knew of the Treaty of Tilsit, Canning concluded that Napoleon intended to compel her to join him. She had shown friendliness to Napoleon, and Napoleon regarded her aid as essential to his schemes. Her small fleet might turn the scale in this desperate struggle. In September an English fleet appeared off Copenhagen, bombarded the town, and cut out the Danish fleet.

The Danes, incensed, closed their ports to England ; but the violent fit of epileptic rage into which Napoleon fell on hearing the news is the best justification of Canning's high-handed action. The English outrage was soon balanced by that of the French in Spain. Through the Tagus English goods were still finding their way into the Peninsula. To subjugate Portugal and to complete the conquest of the Mediterranean, it was still necessary for Napoleon to seize Egypt, Corfu, Sicily, and, above all, Spain. In October Junot marched from Bayonne upon Lisbon.

Portugal was secured ; it was now the turn of Spain. Taking advantage of the quarrel between Charles IV. and his son Ferdinand, Napoleon pushed troops into that country. Charles abdicated, and Napoleon, summoning an Assembly of Spanish nobles at Bayonne, compelled Ferdinand to sign away his rights, and placed Joseph Bonaparte upon the throne of Spain. Murat succeeded Joseph on the throne of Naples. So far, the violence and monstrous Machiavellism of the Emperor had succeeded. But before long he was to learn that the seeming triumph of Bayonne was in truth for him a tragedy. He thought he had got Spain, but he had only obtained Ferdinand's worthless signature. He had not bargained with Spanish patriotism, stimulated by the resentment

of the Catholic world at his treatment of the Pope ; for when the latter had refused to recognize Joseph as King of Naples, or to allow the States of the Church to join in the Continental Blockade, Napoleon (1808) kept the Pontiff in captivity at Savona, and transformed the Papal States into simple Departments of France. A sudden and violent rising all over Spain hurled the French back to the Pyrenees. Europe was astounded and encouraged when it learnt that Dupont, with 20,000 men, had been forced to capitulate at Baylen (June, 1808). Junot, isolated in Portugal, was compelled to evacuate the country ; for the English had landed an army, and at the Battle of Vimeiro Wellesley gained his first European victory, and revealed the master-hand which was to wear down the brilliant Corsican. The result of his aggression in Spain was to divide Napoleon's forces, and to expose a wing to the English soldiers.

Napoleon hurried back to Madrid with reinforcements from Prussia, where he had been imposing his own conditions on that country, since it could not pay the indemnity of Tilsit. But before he could complete the conquest or pacification of Spain he was obliged to return post-haste to France. Austria, anxious to recover her lost provinces, and encouraged by English subsidies and the Spanish rising, and the hope of similar risings in Italy and Germany, declared war in April. Their own slowness and the rapidity of Napoleon destroyed the chance of the Austrians. After some desperate fighting on the Danube, Napoleon entered Vienna in triumph (May 13). He endeavoured to cross the Danube, but the bloody Battle of Essling obliged him to wait till reinforcements arrived from Italy. Then the victory of Wagram (July 6) ended the matter. By the Treaty of Vienna (Oct. 14) Austria ceded to France practically the whole of her coastline on the Adriatic, and various portions of

her territory to Bavaria, Warsaw, and Russia. By the apparent moderation of these terms, and by allying himself with an Austrian Princess, Napoleon hoped to keep Austria neutral in the struggle which he foresaw was coming with Germany and Russia. He divorced the devoted Josephine, widow of General Beauharnais, who had given him no heir, and married the Archduchess Marie Louise (April 1, 1810). Their son, born in the following year, was given the title of the King of Rome. But Austria, though powerless for the moment, was not to be reconciled so. It was a matter of life and death for her to recover her lost provinces and coastline.

The Continental Blockade had almost ruined the Dutch. Napoleon turned out his brother Louis, who endeavoured to support the interest of his subjects, and annexed Holland (July 29, 1810), as well as all the territory between Holland and the Elbe. The boundaries of France now exceeded the boundaries of ancient Gaul. But the Continental System was also ruining St. Petersburg. The Czar refused any longer to close the Baltic to English trade. Instead of ignoring him and finishing the war in Spain, Napoleon chose to leave that "running sore," and with an army of 600,000 men, half of them French, marched upon Moscow (Feb., 1812). He proposed, apparently, to advance thence towards British India. It was the insane enterprise of a restless and reckless megalomaniac. In the undeveloped state of Russia the capture of Moscow would not mean ruin for her. Russia was economically a jelly-fish, and a jelly-fish has no heart. For sentimental reasons, indeed, Alexander fought and lost the Battle of Borodino (Sept. 7) to cover Moscow. It was the bloodiest battle of modern times. But when Napoleon entered the city a fortnight later he found it deserted. The few patriotic citizens who remained soon set it in flames. The Czar refused to negotiate whilst a single

enemy remained on Russian soil. There was nothing for it but to retreat (Oct. 18). The advance across 600 miles of barren country with all the enormous stores necessary for so huge an army had already cost over 100,000 men. The retreat of the ragged and starving horde, harassed by Russians and Cossacks, living on horseflesh, suffering from snow-sickness, frost-bitten, and floundering through the ice and snow, forms a tale of horror which has passed into a legend, and which no pen can exaggerate.

Napoleon, who had left the army and ridden back to Paris, at once ordered a new conscription. He had lost nearly half a million men and nearly all the old officers of the Grand Army; he had lost his prestige and popularity. Taxation rose at a bound, and his military empire began to crumble. Two hundred thousand men were locked up in Spain, where jealous Generals and the immense difficulties of war so far from their base were enabling Wellington to press slowly forward towards the French frontier. Sweden, under Napoleon's old General, Bernadotte, had joined Great Britain. All North Germany rose as one man against the hated despotism of the French Emperor. Napoleon endeavoured to smash Russia and Prussia before Austria joined them. The victories of Lützen and Bautzen (May 2 and 21) justified him. He granted an armistice, but refused to treat on condition of ceding Illyria and his German possessions. It was not enough to keep Italy, the Rhine frontier, and the Netherlands. The refusal was insane. Austria, intent on regaining her coast provinces, declared war (Aug. 21). Napoleon brought up reinforcements from Spain, but Prussians, Russians, Austrians closed upon him in increasing numbers. Gradually encircled at Leipzig, after three days' terrific fighting, in which he lost some 70,000 men, the Emperor began his retreat to France (Oct. 19). As

he still refused to treat, the Allies advanced. Wellington was approaching from the south. Napoleon fought on against overwhelming odds with the most desperate valour, but on March 31 the victorious Allies marched into Paris, and on April 11 the Emperor abdicated.

At the instigation of Talleyrand recourse was had to the principle of legitimacy. The Bourbon line was restored, and Louis XVIII. recognized as King. The French frontier was to be as it was in 1791 (Treaty of Paris). The Powers of Europe met in the Congress of Vienna to rearrange the map of Europe. Napoleon, treated with a generosity to which he himself had ever been a stranger, took leave of the Old Guard at Fontainebleau, was granted Elba in full sovereignty, and occupied himself in entirely reconstructing the administrative system of that island.

Upon his restoration, Louis XVIII. granted a Charter of Constitutional Government, which was far more real and satisfactory than that of Napoleon. Republican and Democratic ideas were quite discredited, and though the Bourbon dynasty suffered from the odium of being restored by foreign armies, and had to bear the burden of Napoleon's legacy of national humiliation and financial embarrassment, nobody but a few veteran soldiers wished for the return of the Emperor. Louis XVIII., instead of being content to live down the unpopularity of a restored dynasty, went out of his way to secure his own dethronement. He was obliged to reduce the army, but he offended the pride of the nation in the soldiers, who had won for it so much glory, by supplanting Napoleon's faithful officers with *émigrés* who had been fighting against France. Though really prepared to act as a Constitutional Monarch, he allowed himself to be forced into a reactionary attitude by his entourage of *émigrés*. The result was “The Hundred Days.”

When France was thoroughly alarmed at the prospect of a wholesale policy of reaction, Napoleon, who had kept himself well informed of the state of public opinion, suddenly landed in the Gulf of Juan (March 1, 1815), and, posing as an Apostle of Peace and a Constitutional Monarch coming to deliver his country from a reactionary Government, was received with enthusiasm by the army. His journey to Paris, however, was not the triumphal march of 1799. Ney joined him, but many towns shut their gates as he passed. Louis XVIII. fled from his capital. The eight Powers denounced Napoleon as an outlaw and a disturber of the world's peace, seeing that he had broken the Convention of the preceding April. They dared not give him time to raise and train the half million men he calculated upon by October: The English and Prussians, therefore, without waiting for the Austrians and Russians, who would have made the odds overwhelming, advanced at once into Belgium. Napoleon saw his chance, and made the most of it. Massing 120,000 men on the Belgian frontier, where 210,000 British, Hanoverians, Dutch, Belgians, and Prussians were extended along a frontier of 100 miles, he attempted to surprise Wellington, and very nearly succeeded. Making a sudden and unexpected advance with an army which, if not large enough, was purely French and fiercely enthusiastic, he struck the Prussians under Blücher at Ligny, whilst Ney held Wellington at Quatre-Bras (June 16). But for counter-orders issued by Ney, a flank attack by Count d'Erlon would have destroyed the Prussians. As it was, they were hurled back, and, if they had been pursued more vigorously, might have been annihilated. Wellington fell back upon a strong defensive position at Waterloo, promising to hold it if Blücher would come to his aid on the morning of June 18, 1815. The indomitable Prussian endeavoured to keep his word, but did not achieve his



Aug. Rischg.

LOUIS PHILIPPE (1830-1848).

From an engraving by Skelton and Hopwood, from a painting by Eug. Lami.

daring flank march until 7.30 in the evening. All that day Napoleon, whose health had long been breaking up, and who had wasted precious time after Ligny, staked his own existence and that of his army upon the chance of smashing the thin red line, that crowned the slopes of Waterloo, before the Prussians could come up. There was no room for prudence. Politically, he was bound either to win or lose this battle. He underrated the generalship of Wellington and the steadfastness of British infantry, for he had not met them in Spain. He hurled against them a terrific frontal attack; there was a whirlwind of wonderful infantry and cavalry charges, and the final heroic charge of the Old Guard, heroically met; and still the English crowned the hill. Blücher came up in time to hamper Napoleon's last effort and take up the pursuit, which did not end until Wellington and Blücher had occupied Paris and restored Louis XVIII. (July 8).

Before the hostile attitude of the Deputies, who, at the suggestion of La Fayette, had declared themselves in permanent session, Napoleon had abdicated in favour of his son (June 23), and then, finding the coast narrowly watched, delivered himself up to Captain Maitland on the *Bellerophon*. Acting as gaoler responsible to the other Powers, who, with her, had suffered so much at the hands of this restless and unscrupulous schemer, Great Britain kept him in careful confinement at St. Helena. Brute force and material gain were the only arguments he had ever used or respected. After his escape from Elba it was impossible to trust to his honour. Had Blücher caught him, he intended to shoot him for a brigand. The Last Phase of Napoleon, viewed in the light of his own history and the safety of Europe, requires no apology.

XXV

FROM WATERLOO TO SEDAN A.D. 1815—1871

LOUIS XVIII. had learnt his lesson. He could not check the violent outburst of Royalist vengeance in the South, known as the "White Terror," to distinguish it from the "Red Terror" of Robespierre; but thereafter he turned a deaf ear to the reactionaries, and the rest of his reign was uneventful. France earnestly desired peace, and peace was not broken except for an expedition into Spain to restore Ferdinand VII. as absolute monarch. Louis' successor was less wise. As Comte d'Artois, he had identified himself with clerical reactionaries and the ultra-loyalists, and on his accession (September 16, 1824) as Charles X., he entered on a course which compelled the nation to dethrone him. First the *rentiers* and financiers were exasperated by the conversion of the Five per Cents. into Three per Cents., the money so saved being assigned to those who had lost lands or rights in the Revolution. Then a series of reactionary measures were introduced by his Minister, Villèle, into the Chamber of Deputies, only to be rejected by the Liberal majority. Exasperated by opposition, and believing himself to be the Divinely appointed saviour of royalty and religion, Charles, in 1830, appealed to force he did not possess. Dissolving the recently elected Chamber, since a majority of Liberals had been returned, he issued (July 25) a series

of Ordinances restoring the censorship of the Press and suspending the Constitution, whilst he proposed to exercise dictatorial powers. "Three glorious days" of battle, first in the Press and then in the streets of Paris, ensued. Charles withdrew the Ordinances, but too late. The dissolved Chambers had already met and dethroned him. He fled to England, and a likely King, with Liberal views, was found in the younger branch of the Bourbons. Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orleans, accepted the Crown and the Charter of August 9.

This was an amended edition of the Charter of 1814. Catholicism ceased to be the State religion, but a law for liberty of public instruction was promised. The Press was freed. For the Divine right of the Sovereign was substituted the choice of the people.

Practically the whole *bourgeoisie* was enfranchised. Both Chambers were to initiate legislation. But the Upper Chamber was politically sterile, for it was composed of life peers nominated by the King, and the Chamber of Deputies consisted of men who paid 500 francs in taxes, elected by those who paid 200 francs. This franchise led directly to the breakdown of 1848. For not only was the electorate really very small—about 240,000—but representation was so badly distributed as to render even these inarticulate. The property qualification for the Deputies also prevented the lower *bourgeoisie* from choosing their own men. Unrepresentative as it was, the Chamber was divided into half a dozen groups, constantly changing in their attitude and aims. The modern "Government of the Centre" had begun under Louis XVIII. Between the extreme Right (Conservative) and the extreme Left (Radical), a fluid body of Deputies kept, and still keeps, the Government moderately Liberal, but always on the verge of dissolution.

At first the Ministries of Louis-Philippe, led by Casimir-

Périer, Soult, Duc de Broglie, Molé, and Thiers and Guizot, a group of cultivated doctrinaires enamoured of the British Constitution, which they profoundly misunderstood, proved strong enough to repress discontent ; but after an attempt upon the life of the *bourgeois* King in 1835, the reactionary "Laws of September" multiplied the revolutionary Republicans. On the whole, however, the Government was not reactionary ; its fault was that it was staidly Conservative, and that whilst Thiers and Guizot were absorbed in manœuvring a Parliamentary majority, they ignored the growing popular demand for electoral, Parliamentary, and social reform—electoral reform, for the franchise was too narrow ; Parliamentary reform, for a series of State trials revealed the methods of corruption in the Chamber and the Government departments by which majorities were maintained ; social reform, for this is the period of the development of modern Socialism. Fourier, Saint-Simon, Leroux, Louis Blanc, and Carl Marx were writing, and their doctrines were finding a ready audience amongst the artisans of the towns, whose numbers were being increased by the industrial development of the age, and who were left voteless. Violent militant Socialism was preached in the clubs of the great towns and Paris. Moreover, Guizot had failed to solve the religious question by his measures in fulfilment of the promise to restore liberty of teaching in secondary education. The Clergy, therefore, already hostile to the "July Monarchy," threw in their lot with the Republicans.

The foreign policy of the Government was also unpopular. True, Algeria was conquered and added to the possessions of France (1830-1847). But Louis-Philippe was blamed for helping the English to establish and maintain the independence of Belgium, rather than annexing it (1830-1839) ; for not helping the Poles against Russia ;

for resisting the national demand for war when the Powers checkmated French designs upon Egypt; and, again, for throwing away the valued *entente cordiale* with England and favouring the policy of Austria in Switzerland and Italy, in order to aggrandize his family, when, through Guizot, he arranged the marriage of his son, the Duc de Montpensier, with the sister of the Queen of Spain.

So it came about that when, after they had spent the autumn in proclaiming that Parliamentary government in France was a farce, and in demanding an extension of the suffrage, the Opposition of moderate Liberals announced their intention of holding a public demonstration on February 22, in the then popular form of an open-air banquet, they lit a train which they had not the least idea was attached to a powder-magazine. The banquet was forbidden, and the Opposition leaders, who wished for reform, but did not dream of revolution, obeyed. But the Socialist artisans of the Faubourg St. Antoine turned out in force. As everybody cried, "Vive la Réforme!" the *bourgeoisie* thought that the workmen were shouting for them. Accordingly, when the demonstration developed into a riot, the National Guard, composed mainly of small shopkeepers, refused to act against the insurgents. After a collision with the soldiers, a huge armed mob marched upon the Tuileries (February 24). The King abdicated, and the mob, invading the Chamber, set up a Provisional Government of a strongly Socialistic character, including Ledru-Rollin; Lamartine, a Republican poet, honest, well-meaning, eloquent, and exceedingly vague; Louis Blanc, the Socialist writer; and Albert, an artisan. The Republic was proclaimed (February 26, 1848). France was astonished. Outside a few large towns Socialism had no supporters. The first step of the Provisional Government was to commit suicide. In accordance with their principles, they summoned a National Assembly, a single

Chamber of paid Deputies to be elected on universal suffrage (over twenty-one years of age). Nine million electors were thus suddenly enfranchised, and, granted at last complete political equality, were allowed to speak their minds. They declared at once that they intended to have nothing to do with Socialism. They returned a great majority of moderate Republicans, a strong Royalist minority, and hardly any Socialists at all.

Meantime the Provisional Government had passed some measures, most of which did more credit to their hearts than to their understandings. The best of these were the Factory Acts and the emancipation of slaves in the colonies ; the most foolish the disastrous creation of national workshops (February 27). Louis Blanc was identified with the theory that every man has a "right" to work and to be paid wages. The Provisional Government made itself responsible for supplying both, and began the experiment in Paris. Workmen and vagabonds poured in from every part of the country. A series of reckless strikes began, the workmen calculating that if they lost they could still count on work from the Government. A financial panic, created by these Socialistic measures, compelled many employers to shut down their works. Within a month or so, 100,000 claimants to the right to work, concentrated on the outskirts of Paris, were being fed and paid for work which had not yet been provided—a besieging army prepared for revolution the moment the Government should be compelled for want of money to cease from its costly and impracticable experiment.

The Assembly, which met on May 4, appointed an Executive Committee of Five, including Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin. An attempt was made by the Socialist mob to terrorize the Chamber, when it was seen that it was composed of moderate men, and that violence was their only hope. The Socialist clubs organized an attack,

headed by Albert and Barbès, and similar to that of February 22, on pretence of urging the Government to support the Polish Insurrection, since it was regarded as the duty of Republics to wage war with Kings. The National Guard, however, saved the situation (May 15). The mob was quelled. It remained to deal with the national workshops. After some hesitation, the promise of work and wages was abruptly cancelled (June 21), and the workmen were ordered to disperse to the provinces or enter the army. Instead of dispersing, they began to build barricades. Half of Paris was turned into a sort of fort. It was evident that all compromise between the Republicans and the Socialist artisans was at an end. The Committee of Five resigned, and General Cavaignac was appointed Military Dictator. The attack on the barricades began on June 23. For four days there was desperate fighting and terrible bloodshed. Government artillery turned the scale. Several thousand insurgents were exiled (June 27). The first attempt since the days of Robespierre to force the views of a Jacobin minority upon an unwilling people had failed.

The Assembly had won ; but the "four days of June" led to its fall. The *bourgeoisie*, panic-stricken, realized that the existence of private property had been at stake, and Communism within an ace of triumphing : this they were determined to resist now, as in 1871 ; they demanded the establishment of a strong centralized Government at once. The vanquished artisans, who had hoped to realize in a day the whole programme of present-day Socialism, were bitterly resentful against the Republicans. Monarchy under some form must be re-established. But the Assembly was pledged to Republicanism. They drew up a Constitution, therefore, which, under the guise of a Republic, gave to its President far more power than had been enjoyed by Louis-Philippe (November 4, 1848).

He was to be elected by direct, universal suffrage ; to hold office for four years, and not to be re-elected ; he was to name his own Ministers, and they were to divide responsibility with him. Such was the Executive, completely severed from a single Legislative Chamber, elected by universal suffrage, with a lifetime of three years. Revision of this unworkable scheme was rendered practically impossible. Such, after half a century of constitution-mongering, was the supreme achievement of French political science. "We must trust to Providence!" cried Lamartine, and stood for the Presidency. And Providence, speaking through the electorate—a Conservative peasantry and a scared middle class—voted for the restoration of order, chose neither high-flying Socialist, nor sturdy Republican like General Cavaignac, but, by an overwhelming majority, Prince Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, son of Louis, once King of Holland, and nephew of the great Napoleon (December 10, 1848). The first result of universal suffrage, therefore, was the establishment of an arbitrary monarchical Government.

France knew little of Louis-Napoleon, save that he had made two abortive Bonapartist demonstrations—at Strasbourg (1836) and Boulogne (1840)—and had published, during his consequent imprisonment in the fortress of Ham, some books which breathed the spirit of sentimental and mystical Socialism. Since his escape (1846), he had conducted his propaganda from England, and when elected to the last Chamber had declared himself a Republican. But he was the inheritor of an immense renown and of a dynasty which had been absent long enough for its virtues only to be remembered. He was the heir to the Napoleonic legend, created by the Martyr of St. Helena and his followers, which represented the aggression of Bonaparte as that of the archangel of

Liberty. The histories of Thiers, the memorial of Las Casas, the ballads of Béranger, following upon the great Romantic Revival which had ensued upon the fall of Napoleon I.; all tended to increase the glamour of the memory of the "little corporal with his grey military coat." Vague dreams of a glorious foreign policy, and of a liberal programme such as Monarchy and Republic alike had hitherto refused, rallied to the standard of his nephew all those who saw in any other choice the threat of Communism or of clerical reaction.

Apart from his tradition, the Constitution itself gave every incentive to a man of ambition to override it. Was the chosen of the people likely to retire into obscurity at the end of four years? He played his hand with great dexterity. After the intervention of France in Italy on behalf of the Pope (1849), parties resolved themselves into Catholic Reactionaries and Republican Democrats. Louis-Napoleon had only to steer a course between the two, and to ingratiate himself, as he well knew how, with all the leading men of the day, without committing himself with any of them. Then, under pretence of exalting authority, he passed from the Dictatorship of October, 1849, to hereditary Empire as Napoleon III.* (November, 1852). For, after a series of terrorist measures, a *coup d'état* (December, 1851) was followed by the seizure and transportation of all the Republican and Socialist leaders, including Victor Hugo. And on December 21 some seven million electors, weary of impotent factions and partisan squabbles, and sighing for the strong and glorious government of Napoleon I., had delegated to his nephew the task of drawing up a Constitution. He bestowed upon them a Constitution which concentrated all power in his own hands, with Council and Senate nominated by himself, and an Assembly which had no

* Napoleon II., "L'Aiglon," King of Rome, had never reigned.

right of initiative or amendment. The Press was gagged and public meetings suppressed.

Obstinate, crafty, a dreamer and yet impulsive, by nature and history a schemer, nobody believed in his mission to realize the "Ideas of Napoleon," to reconcile order with liberty and popular rights with the principle of authority, more firmly than Louis-Napoleon himself. A man of kindly and generous temperament and of liberal views, he had long indulged in beautiful, vague dreams of the abolition of poverty through Socialism and universal peace. France was to be the centre of a European Confederacy pledged to maintain liberty and national autonomy. To this end, and to secure the Napoleonic dynasty—the first and most important blessing of mankind, as it seemed to him—he endeavoured to rally all classes to his support, with the aid of the army and a searching police.

The "Man of Order" set himself first to develop national industry, to promote order, and to ameliorate the condition of the working classes. It was a condition of his existence that he should keep the masses contented by economic and social reforms. Great public works were set on foot to satisfy the unemployed. Paris was rebuilt, and became a city beautiful, with broad boulevards and magnificent public spaces and buildings, designed by the hand of Haussmann—a city as gay as it was beautiful, since the theory of the time was that it was necessary to spend and entertain in order to promote prosperity. The Great Exhibitions of Paris (1855 and 1867) were the apotheosis of the Emperor's industrial policy.

It was another condition of the Napoleonic régime that the national love of military glory should be satisfied. Thus, though actuated by very different motives, Louis-Napoleon was led to commit the same errors as the Grand

Monarque. Expenditure at home and abroad produced financial embarrassment, which was further increased by a sudden plunge in the direction of Free Trade. Abandoning the Protectionist principles which had governed French trade since the time of Colbert, he, like Vergennes, made a commercial treaty with England, and by so doing hit the French cotton-spinners hard (1860).

Meantime the Crimean War (1854-1856) satisfied the national desire for the glory of Napoleonic arms abroad, and the Clergy, who had supported Louis-Napoleon as the heir of Napoleon, the "restorer of the altars," were rewarded by regaining control of education. Since the Courts of Europe looked askance upon the new dynasty, Louis-Napoleon concluded a love-match with a beautiful and charming, but ignorant, woman, Eugénie, Countess de Téba, who was completely subject to Ultramontane influence, and helped the clerical party at the Tuileries. But the "party of the priests" was soon to be alienated by the foreign policy of the Emperor, and to join the growing opposition of injured Protectionists, disappointed Republicans, suppressed Socialists, and irreconcilable Legitimists. Intoxicated by the military triumph of the Crimean War, Louis-Napoleon at last thought himself strong enough to indulge in the realization of his dreams, and to act as the liberator of the nations, in fulfilment of the "Ideas of Napoleon." After interfering in Roumania, he decided "to do something for Italy." The Italian War was the first step towards his dethronement. It was the fault of his diplomacy that, like all second-rate statesmen, he was always making decisive moves without any clear idea as to their practical results. In May, 1859, he undertook to help Italy to regain her independence "as far as the Adriatic." This promise was only half kept. For after the victories of Magenta and Solferino in June, Napoleon abruptly made peace with Austria

(Treaty of Villafranca and Zürich, November), and then, by the Treaty of Turin with Piedmont, annexed Nice and Savoy (March, 1860). The Italians were disappointed, the French Ultramontanes alienated, since war on behalf of Italian independence had involved their Emperor in opposition to the temporal power of the Pope ; and the whole affair advertised throughout Europe the curse of his inheritance, the dread of Napoleonic aggression. This evil impression was accentuated by remonstrances with Russia on the Polish question, and by a rash expedition to Mexico, where Napoleon dreamed of making the Archduke Maximilian of Austria the ruler of a Latin Empire. The project collapsed in ruin and bloodshed after four years of costly struggle (1862-1866). The disastrous result was that when Prussia, in alliance with Italy, had swiftly and suddenly overthrown Austria at Sadowa (July 3, 1866), Napoleon, with his best troops locked up in Mexico, found his army unready, and was unable to play the part of an armed mediator. The Treaty of Nikolsburg allowed the Germanic Confederacy to fall under the hegemony of Berlin. The interests of France called for intervention, but Napoleon, expecting Austria to win, had waited to intervene on behalf of Prussia. It was now too late ; Napoleon must either fight or accept a national humiliation. Through his Ambassador, Benedetti, he attempted to retrieve his prestige by securing compensation for Bismarck's success and the coming union of all Germany, which threatened to upset the balance of power. He demanded the cession of the Palatinate and Mainz. Bismarck rejected this "hotel-keeper's bill." It was a challenge to fight which Napoleon could not take up. Benedetti was then led on to make the fatal proposal that Prussia should help France to occupy Luxemburg and Belgium.

Public confidence in the absolute régime was shaken.

The “humiliation of Sadowa” increased the general discontent ; the demand for the “indispensable liberties,” as Thiers phrased it, grew more pressing. Napoleon had already begun to modify the mock Constitution of 1852 by granting the legislative body the right of presenting an Address each year in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and the publication of their debates thereon (November, 1860). Further facilities for public discussion of the Government policy were now granted. The gag upon the Press and public meetings was partly withdrawn. These concessions were made in order to pass the Army Act of 1868, for in face of the Mexican fiasco and the military position of Prussia, it was essential to reorganize the army. But the most dangerous moment for a bad Government is when it begins to reform. The election of 1869 proved that the Government was on the edge of an abyss. Napoleon hoped to stave off revolution by making concessions in the direction of a constitutional monarchy and by successful war. Tenure of the throne depended upon the prestige of the throne, and this could only be retrieved by military glory achieved at the expense of Prussia. He was told that the army was ready “to the last button.” It was not ; but there was an army across the border that was—a nation in arms, every detail of whose machinery and campaign had been prepared through years of toil by the Prussian King, by Bismarck, Moltke, and Roon.

Bismarck, in order to complete the union of the South German States with the Hohenzollern, had long foreseen that he would have to fight France in order to free them from the menace of such a neighbour at Strasburg and on the left bank of the Rhine. He had frustrated Napoleon’s repeated attempts to strengthen his eastern frontier. Napoleon himself had sacrificed all hope of help from Austria or Italy when, in obedience to his Roman Catholic

friends, he had despatched his troops to protect the Pope against the Italian patriots (November, 1867). The *chassepots* (new breech-loading rifles) of the French army had routed Garibaldi's troops at Mentana; but in so doing had not only sacrificed the hope of Italian aid against Prussia, but strengthened the Republican opposition, led by Jules Favre, Émile Ollivier, Léon Gambetta, and a strong labour party, at home. Bismarck knew that the proposal of Benedetti for the acquisition of Belgium would estrange England and complete the isolation of France.* He was now prepared to force on a war, for which, as we have seen, Napoleon was not undesirous, and in which Bismarck intended that he should appear the aggressor.

On July 3, 1870, it was announced that Prince Leopold von Hohenzollern was a candidate for the vacant throne of Spain. He had accepted the candidature under pressure from Bismarck. France could not possibly permit Spain to fall under the influence of Prussia. Benedetti therefore pressed King William for an immediate renunciation of Leopold's claims. His candidature was withdrawn. Over-eager to press home a diplomatic triumph, the French Foreign Minister, the Duc de Grammont, further demanded a promise that King William would never sanction any such proposal. The demand was refused politely, but Bismarck contrived to convey the impression, by a telegram published in Paris, that the French Ambassador had been treated with disrespect. Carried away by an outburst of popular indignation, Napoleon decided to declare war. In Germany the famous telegram, falsely dated from Ems, had given the impression that Benedetti had forced his demands upon the privacy of King William. Both sides began to

* He published it in the *Times*, after the declaration of the war, with the desired effect.

mobilize on July 14. Everything depended upon the rapidity with which this was done. If France could strike at once, the South German States might hesitate ; Italy, Austria, and Denmark might come to her aid. But the French mobilization was inadequate and confused ; the army and navy were hopelessly ill-prepared. With amazing rapidity three German armies advanced towards the Rhine to meet the French armies, which, so the railway system imposed, must be concentrated about Metz and Strasburg, but divided by the Vosges Mountains. The army of Alsace was commanded by Marshal Macmahon, the army of Lorraine ("the army of the Rhine") by the Emperor and Marshal Bazaine. The reserve was at Châlons. Within a week (August 2 to 6) the bubble of French military prestige was pricked. On August 7 the French fell back behind the Moselle.

It was necessary—to pacify the Parisians—to make a stand east of Metz. But the murderous battle of Gravelotte (August 18) compelled Bazaine to take shelter beneath the guns of Metz. That fortress was invested, and an army of 240,000 Germans was presently advancing on Paris by way of Châlons, where a new army was being formed under Macmahon. He wished to retreat upon Paris ; but that meant revolution, since it would be construed by the mob as the abandonment of the army of the Rhine shut up in Metz. Deceived by a message from Bazaine, who announced his intention of breaking out in the direction of Châlons or Sedan, Macmahon therefore ordered the fatal march to the Meuse, hoping to join Bazaine at Montmédy. Bazaine, however, failed to break out from Metz, and Macmahon, falling into Moltke's trap at Sedan, was surrounded, and suffered the most tremendous disaster of modern warfare. One hundred thousand men surrendered, including the Emperor, who, sick and broken, had elected to stay and suffer

with his soldiers (September 1). The Prussians advanced on Paris, and in September began the siege which was to last for five and a half months. Whilst Thiers sought in vain for help at foreign Courts, Gambetta's heroic efforts to relieve the capital, though they did much to restore the prestige of French arms and national spirit, were no less vain. A desperate sortie from the starving capital (January 19) failed to break through the Prussian lines. On the 23rd Jules Favre opened negotiations for capitulation, and on the 28th an armistice was arranged.

At the news of the disaster of Sedan, the Paris mob rose and overthrew the Assembly. A Republic was proclaimed, and a Government of National Defence was formed, with General Trochu for President. But in the task of defending Paris during the siege (September 16, 1870, to January 28, 1871) the Government of September 4 was hampered by the Parisian Socialists. Instead of uniting to show a common front to the enemy, the Social Democrats organized insurrections within the walls of the besieged city. When the armistice was concluded, elections were held, and a new Assembly met at Bordeaux. Once more the voice of the nation declared against anarchy and revolutionary schemes. A majority hostile to the democratic Socialism of Paris had been returned. It fell to Thiers, at the head of the new Government, with Jules Favre and Ernest Picard, to negotiate the peace with Bismarck. By the Treaty of Frankfort (May 10) France ceded all Alsace, except Belfort, and German Lorraine, with Metz. The enormous indemnity of £200,000,000 was exacted. The rapidity with which the French people recovered from this smashing blow to their prosperity and prestige is one of the most remarkable features in their brilliant and eventful history.

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[b. = battle, T. = Treaty.]

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